

# 48th Annual CROSS CULTURAL CONFERENCE

FROM AWARENESS TO ACCOUNTABILITY:
Including the Whole Community in Service Delivery

# REGISTRATION

FEBRUARY 26 - MARCH 1, 2026 MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA



"Excellence in Health Care Through Education"

www.crossculturalactioncouncil.org









**CONFERENCE GOAL** The Conference is designed to provide participants with the knowledge, skills and networking opportunities that will enhance the delivery and effectiveness of services in their respective professions.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND This conference is designed for persons working with diverse cultural groups including but not limited to: students, social workers, nurses, professional counselors, psychologists, physicians, attorneys, law enforcement, policy makers, educators, members of the clergy, criminal justice professionals, as well as other interested personnel.

**CONTACT HOURS AND CONTINUING EDUCATION** This continuing education activity has applied for nursing, social work, and general hours through Mid Carolina AHEC; as well as continuing education credits through NBCC.

# STUDENT LEARNING ACADEMY 28, 2026

Tiffany Hollis, Ph. D. Student Academy Director

CALLING ALL STUDENTS

Traditional and

Non-Traditional

# REFLECTIONS FROM PAST STUDENT ATTENDEES!

### SHATREIA DOTSON

Major: Sociology | Minor: Criminology | She/her/hers | Senior(May 2023)

While at the conference, I had the opportunity to introduce the keynote speaker. I appreciated introducing the keynote speaker, but the best part was my conversations with her and other women who now stay in contact with me. When those who have never seen you believe in you, it helps the marathon seem a little shorter. I needed the Cross Cultural Conference; it helped me understand the importance of self-care, networking, and moving at your own pace. I learned different methods and tools that I could use so that I would not experience burnout. I needed the unconditional support given. If it weren't for the sponsorship for the Cross-Cultural Conference, I would not have been able to experience the networking opportunities.

### **ADONYA PERTELL**

Majors: Psychology; Sociology with a Concentration in Social Justice
Minors: Women and Gender Studies; Criminology | She/her/hers | Senior (May 2023)

This year was the second time I was able to attend the Cross Cultural Mental Health Conference and engage with the Student Academy. I have gained knowledge and perspective about the social services field that I would not have gathered without attending this conference. Each year has been insightful and engaging. I thoroughly enjoyed my time at the conference and feel honored to have the opportunity to be funded to attend the conference with my peers. It is a space where we can physically get a glimpse of us having the possibilities to be and thrive in certain professions. I love how the Student Academy, and the conference in general has sessions that go beyond the logistics of being in the mental health field. I learned how to protect my peace and navigate through spaces in order to show up in the profession as my best self so I can give that to others. The networking opportunities that the conference provides for us as students is amazing, and I am truly grateful for the experience.

### **ALEXIS DALY**

Psychology Major

Languages and Intercultural Studies Minor Senior May 2023

I would like to briefly reflect on things from the presentations that stuck with me. Dr. Mary Rawls spoke of compassion fatigue, which is a subject that I had heard about but had little knowledge of. It is present in those working in helping professions and definitely something to look out for. Dr. Jones left us with the advice to "act like you are supposed to be here" which stood out to me.

A full day of workshops and networking opportunities designed for our future leaders! This is an amazing opportunity your students will not want to miss. Social Work and Counseling Exam Prep is Back!



Are you ready to pass the NCE and take the next step in your counseling career? Are you a Social Worker preparing for the licensure exam to broaden your career outcomes? Whether it's your first attempt or your fifth, this day-long training provides you with the tools you need for success!

# Instructor

Aubrey L. Sejuit, PhD, LISW-CP/S, LPC-A, LCAS, AADC, MEd. Assistant Professor at Winthrop University



Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort 10000 Beach Club Drive • Myrtle Beach, SC 29572 COST: \$150

TIME 8:00am-4:00pm

REGISTER <a href="https://cvent.me/4dzLKe">https://cvent.me/4dzLKe</a>

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 28, 2026

# **2026 CONFERENCE AGENDA**



# CONFERENCE REGISTRATION OPENS 1:00 PM

# PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

1:00 - 2:00

The Journey of Grief:
Some Beatitudes for Better Bereavement
A. JOSEPH BAROODY JR., D.MIN., LPC

This workshop is designed to offer practical guidance for caregivers who have a limited amount of time to help someone who is facing the death of a loved one. You may be a nurse, chaplain, social worker who has a few minutes to a few hours to help family members begin the journey of grief. It is also of value to counselors and psychotherapists who are helping someone make the journey of grief. These guidelines are presented in the form of beatitudes.

2:15 - 3:15

Faith, Community, and Mental Health

**E. NICOLE QUICK, LPCS** 

School Based Therapist, Florence 1 Schools

Participants will be able to define, understand and make the connection between mental health, spirituality, and self-acceptance. This workshop will provide a step by step process for developing self-acceptance practice using practical biblical tools.

3:30 - 4:30

**Protecting Our Sacred Spaces: Safety & Security (no ceu)** 

**REV. KELVIN WASHINGTON** 

Retired Police Chief, and former Sheriff and United States Marshal

Join us for a practical, hands-on workshop designed to help faith leaders, staff, and volunteers strengthen safety in their places of worship. Together, we'll cover how to create safe spaces, develop an active shooter response plan, recognize suspicious behavior, design fast exit routes, conduct effective safety drills, and assess the overall security of your facility. Participants will leave with tools, strategies, and resources to build confidence and preparedness—ensuring that their congregations remain safe, welcoming, and resilient.

4:30 - 5:45

Funding the Mission: Essentials of Grant Writing, Unlock the Secrets to Successful Grant Writing!

JUDY RICHBURG, MPA KAY TAYLOR HIGHTOWER, ESQ.

Join us for a hands-on workshop where you'll learn the step-by-step process of crafting winning proposals, from writing powerful narratives to building effective budgets. Discover how to identify the right funders, tailor your proposals to their priorities, and walk away with practical tools to strengthen your grant writing success.

4:30 - 5:45

**Collaborative Community Mental Health** 

DR. EBONY GAFFNEY, MD, PHD, MBA

Executive and Medical Director Spartanburg Area Mental Health Center

The gap in collaborative community mental health refers to the disconnects or shortcomings that prevent effective, coordinated care among various stakeholders involved in supporting mental health at the community level. This workshop will identify common gaps in collaboration and discuss evidence-based strategies for addressing those gaps.

6:00

Faith, Healing, and Forgiveness After Trauma (no ceu)

REV. SHARON RISHER BRANDON RISHER CLARISSA WHALEY

Grounded in the power of faith, this workshop explores how spiritual practices help us navigate trauma, find strength in forgiveness, and embrace the healing journey. Honoring the legacy of the Emanuel Nine, participants will reflect on the role of prayer, and community in overcoming grief and pain. Together, we will learn how faith can inspire self-care, resilience, and compassion, equipping us to heal personally and to support one another in building stronger, more faithful communities.



8:00 8:30 - 9:45 REGISTRATION OPENS OPENING PLENARY

**SPEAKER** 

CATHERINE O. DURHAM, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, FAAN Dean, MUSC College of Nursing



10:00 - 11:45

**CLINICAL TRACK** 

**CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS** 

Trauma and the Brain:
How Play Therapy Helps Clients Recover
NIKOLE JIGGETTS, LCSW, LCSW-C RPT-S, CTS

Replay Counseling Center, LLC

Trauma has been defined as terror, feeling unsafe and not in control of the situation, and disruptions in early attachment can also be a trauma a person experiences. Many feel that what they have experienced is "normal" and do not know that processing trauma is essential and not to be ignored. This training follows the R.E.A.C.H. and Connect\* technique, allowing workers to have a grasp of individuals with unprocessed memories resulting in anger and disruptive action.

**POLICY TRACK** 

Ethics In Technology & Social Media In The Helping Professions

BARBARA MELTON, M.ED., LPC/S, LAC/S, NCC, MAC, CS

Mental Health technology has the capacity to greatly improve the lives of our clients, but also can raise ethical concerns, including privacy, data security, and complacency or dependence on using devices rather than appear in person for services. Some services using AI technology can be used as a substitute for human interaction and empathy. In this workshop, we will discuss limitations of technology and how we can use it as a tool to enhance rather than replace human connection and support.

FAMILY /
COMMUNITY TRACK

From Isolation to Inclusion: Mental Health Strategies for Rural and Underserved Populations

AMANDA NICOLE STOVER, MPH, PHD

Rural communities face unique mental health challenges, including limited access to care, stigma, and cultural barriers. This workshop explores the intersection of rural mental health and cultural competence, offering practical strategies for service providers, community leaders, and advocates.

### **FAITH COMMUNITY**

# Unity in the Interfaith Community: Opportunities for Collaboration (no ceu)

Join us for an engaging workshop about bringing together diverse faith traditions to foster understanding, respect, and collaboration. Participants will learn how Judaism, Catholicism, Islam, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and other of the many spiritualities found in S.C. can come together around the shared values that connect us. Through dialogue, stories, and group activities, the workshop will highlight how interfaith partnerships strengthen our communities, build bridges across differences, and inspire collective action for the common good.

PANEL MODERATOR: HOLLI EMORE

Chair Interfaith Partners of South Carolina

PANELISTS: SISTER PAMELA SMITH, SS.C.M., PH.D.

JONATHAN LEADER, PH.D.

**ZARA RABNAWAZ** 

12:00 – 1:45 PRESIDENT'S LUNCHEON

SPEAKER EDWARD SIMMER, MD, MPH, DLFAPA

Director, South Carolina Department of Public Health

2:00 – 3:45 CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS

CLINICAL TRACK Supporting Students Through Trauma:

A Resilience-Based Approach to School Counseling BRANDEE APPLING, PHD, LPC, NCC, ACS, CPCS

University of Georgia

In this session, participants will explore trauma-informed approaches and practical strategies to support students who have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) or other forms of trauma. Grounded in research and best practices, this session will focus on creating safe and supportive school environments that foster resilience and enhance academic success for students. Attendees will gain insight into the psychological and behavioral impacts of trauma, identify different types of trauma exposure and the various types of trauma and learn how to apply trauma-sensitive interventions, and develop skills to promote healing and growth in their school communities. In addition, they will have a better understanding of how to support students with a trauma history through a strengths-based perspective and develop support plans that are resilience-focused.

POLICY TRACK Social Work Ethics in 2026

TERI BROWNE, PHD, MSW

Dean and Professor, College of Social Work

University of South Carolina

This workshop will discuss and identify emerging ethical gaps in social work practice related to technology, equity, and access. We will analyze the implications of systemic access, interdisciplinary teamwork, and data-driven practice on ethical decision-making. Attendees will be able to apply principles from the NASW Code of Ethics to contemporary dilemmas.

FAMILY /
COMMUNITY TRACK

**Unseen Bars: The Overlapping Chains**of Intimate Partner Violence and Incarceration

**DEVIN L. RANDOLPH, PH.D.** 

Assistant Professor at the University of South Carolina Founding Director of Environmental and Social Justice at Voorhees University

NAKISHA S. RANDOLPH, LMFT

Trauma Recovery Therapist at the Veterans Affairs Founder of Anthropos Counseling and Consulting, LLC This session explores the complex and often overlooked connections between intimate partner violence (IPV) and incarceration. It aims to uncover the shared social, psychological, and structural factors that contribute to these interconnected cycles, including trauma, poverty, and systemic inequities. The session will highlight trauma-informed approaches, restorative justice, and community-based support systems as critical pathways to breaking these cycles.

### **FAITH COMMUNITY**

Love Your Neighbor—Report Hate, Protect Community (no ceu) JONATHAN LEADER, PH.D.

University of South Carolina

This workshop will provide faith leaders, staff, and volunteers with the knowledge and tools needed to recognize, document, and respond to hate crimes targeting places of worship. Participants will learn about the rising trends in antisemitism, racism, and other hate-motivated incidents, and explore practical strategies for reporting attacks, enhancing security, and building resilient, safe communities. Through discussion, case studies, and hands-on guidance, attendees will leave equipped to protect their congregations, foster awareness, and strengthen collaboration across faith communities.

4:00 – 5:30 CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS

CLINICAL TRACK Can We Talk: A Community Focused Conversation About

The Mental Health Care of Individuals from

**Marginalized Populations** 

MODERATOR: DR. ASA BRIGGS, DNP

Briggs Psychiatry and Behavioral Health

**TERRANCE WELLS, PHD** 

Family Support Services, LLC

CATHERINE O. DURHAM, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, FAAN

Dean, MUSC College of Nursing

SONYIA RICHARDSON, PH.D., L.C.S.W.

Assistant Professor, School of Social Work and

Department of Psychiatry

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

In this session, Dr. Asa T. Briggs and his panel will explore the impact of systemic barriers, cultural stigma, and limited access to care on marginalized populations. Participants will be invited to reflect on how pain, vulnerability, and shared experience can be used as pathways to connection and resilience. Together, we will consider practical steps toward building equity in mental health care and fostering a culture of openness, transparency, and hope.

FAMILY /
COMMUNITY TRACK

Unseen Divides: The Cost of Mistrust in Teamwork Problem Solving

DR. WALTER SHAWN MCDANIELS

Associate Professor, Benedict College

This presentation explores how a multi-disciplinary group navigates internal dynamics while addressing the sensitive topic of race-sensitive law enforcement training. Comprising members from law enforcement, psychology, social work, academia, faith-based communities, and advocacy, the group's members' experiences were examined through an in-depth thematic analysis of interviews, informed by a descriptive qualitative approach. Let's explore the why behind teamwork failure.



# 8:00 - 9:45 CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS



CLINICAL TRACK

### **Kratom In Rural Communities**

DR. HELENE GUESS-GOLDSMITH, ED.D, LPC, LPC/S, MAC

SC Vocational Rehabilitation Palmetto Center

Kratom is legal, accessible, and often misunderstood; especially in South Carolina's rural communities where mental health resources and inpatient treatment services are limited and misinformation spreads quickly. This workshop will explore the hidden epidemic of Kratom addiction and the urgent need for inpatient and outpatient treatment in areas that are often overlooked.

### **POLICY TRACK**

**Shared Priorities, Shared Progress: Driving Collective Impact in the State Health Improvement Plan** 

**KOBRA EGHTEDARY, PHD** 

Director, State Health Improvement Office, Health Strategy & External Affairs

S.C. Department of Public Health

**FARREN ALLEN, LMSW, MP** 

State Health Improvement Office S.C. Department of Public Health

This interactive workshop will introduce participants to the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP), a five-year strategic plan that brings together partners across the state to improve population health and well-being. Through practical examples and interactive discussion, attendees will leave with tools and inspiration to integrate SHIP priorities and RBA practices into their own work, supporting more connected, responsive efforts across health, human services, education, and other sectors that influence population well-being.

FAMILY /
COMMUNITY TRACK

Addressing Barriers to Mental Health Care for South Carolina's Aging Population

ANCHALEE PRICE, LMFT-A, LPC, CPT

**Psychotherapist** 

This solution-focused workshop explores the unique challenges older adults in South Carolina face in accessing mental health care. Participants will learn how to identify barriers such as stigma, financial limitations, and therapist training gaps—and discover practical strategies to support emotional wellness and resilience in older adults.

10:00 - 11:45

**CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS** 

**CLINICAL TRACK** 

ADHD: A Need for Family Focused Treatment

RIENA KAIN, LISW-CP, LSCSW, ADHD-CCSP

This workshop will discuss the need for family-based approach to treatment and highlight some potential ethical concerns around treatment. Attendees will also be provided an overview of ADHD DX and executive functioning skills.

**POLICY TRACK** 

Healing in Hostile Times: Culturally Responsive Interventions for Race-Based Trauma in the African American Community

JANELLE RENEE ROBINSON, PH.D., LPC-S (SC), NCC

Clinical Training Director/Core Faculty

The Family Institute at Northwestern University

This workshop will discuss the impact of systemic racism on African American clients' mental health and enhance clinician self-awareness to reduce bias and be better equipped to apply culturally responsive interventions to support clients in coping with race-based trauma.

# FAMILY / COMMUNITY TRACK

# In the Wake: Supporting Clients and Ourselves Through Suicidality and Suicide Loss

KAREN ANDREA FLYNN, LMSW, MSW

Ph.D. Student, College of Social Work University of South Carolina

A workshop designed to deepen clinical insight, expand therapeutic tools, and create space for honest dialogue around the realities of suicidality and suicide loss in therapeutic work. We will explore the psychological, relational, and systemic aspects of chronic suicidality; develop approaches for navigating sustained risk; and address what it

**FAITH COMMUNITY** 

Guarding the Flock: Preventing Sexual Harassment and Misconduct in Ministry (no ceu)

THE HONORABLE TAMARA CURRY EDUARDO K. CURRY, ESQ.

This essential workshop equips pastors, ministry leaders, and church staff with the knowledge and tools to uphold integrity, safety, and trust within their congregations. Rooted in both legal standards and spiritual accountability, the session will explore:

• Clear definitions of sexual harassment and misconduct in ministry contexts

means to continue working ethically and compassionately in the aftermath of a suicide.

- Biblical and ethical foundations for safeguarding relationships
- Power dynamics and boundaries in pastoral care
- Policies for prevention, reporting, and response
- Creating a culture of transparency, respect, and healing

Through case studies, open dialogue, and practical guidance, participants will strengthen their commitment to leading with humility, protecting the vulnerable, and honoring the sacred trust of their calling.

12:00 - 1:45

**OTIS A. CORBITT LUNCHEON** 

**SPEAKER** 

Breaking the Silence: The History, Crisis, and Call to Action on Black Youth Suicide SONYIA RICHARDSON, PH.D., L.C.S.W.

Assistant Professor

School of Social Work and Department of Psychiatry The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

2:00 - 3:45

**CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS** 

**CLINICAL TRACK** 

Assessing Suicidality Across the Lifespan ROBERT BREEN, M.D.

This workshop will discuss recent demographic trends in suicide risk, and how to use Erickson's stages of development to inform suicide prevention assessment at any age.

**POLICY TRACK** 

**Housing Instability: Cross-Cutting Issues and Needs** 

E. ANN GOWDY, PHD, LISW-CP, MSW

Lecturer, College of Social Work University of South Carolina

This session will help participants understand housing instability, including cross-cutting issues and needs. This session will review cross-cutting contributing factors impacting housing instability such as mental health, substance abuse, poverty, situational and environmental stressors, and lack of affordable and accessible housing. A focus will include systematic influences of inequities placing young people at a higher risk of homelessness, along with needs.



# FAMILY / COMMUNITY TRACK

# Traumatic Brain Injury Secondary to Intimate Partner Violence

### SHANNON SCOTT, BSN, RN, SANE-A, SANE-P, FN-CSP.

Forensic Nurse Examiner Program Coordinator McLeod Regional Medical Center

Until recently, traumatic brain injuries (TBI) in victims of intimate partner violence were not widely recognized or studied. While IPV can affect anyone, over one-third of women have experienced this public health crisis at some point in their life; and because up to 92% of the physical strikes sustained by a victim will be to their head, face, and neck, approximately 75% will endure a TBI as a result. This workshop will discuss the association between intimate partner violence and traumatic brain injuries, as well as the importance of recognizing TBI in IPV victims.

### **FAITH COMMUNITY**

# Seeing Signs and Saving Lives: Suicide Awareness (no ceu) GWENDOLYN LC SNIDER, ED.S

Participants will gain valuable information concerning factors that contribute to suicidal thoughts and the warning signs that often precede a crisis. Participants will also learn how to have conversations about mental health with emphasis on empathy and sensitivity.

4:00 - 5:30

# **CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS**

### **CLINICAL TRACK**

# Demystifying Your Client's Brain

# JON D. BEAUMONT, LPCS

Beaumont Counseling Services

This workshop will explain, in simpler terms, the brain processes behind some of the most common diagnoses. This presentation will provide proven explanations, stories, analogies, etc. in simple terms that counselors can use to help clients make sense of what is going on in their brains. Furthermore, brain-based justifications (in laymen terms) for several of the most effective treatments, techniques, strategies, etc. will also be covered.

# FAMILY / COMMUNITY TRACK

# Into the Blue: A Discussion on Breaking the Stigma Around Mental Health and Depression

# ANNA CAROLINE CHINNES, PH.D., L.P.

Assistant Professor of Psychology South Carolina Licensed Psychologist Francis Marion University

### SUSAN K. CARTER, MS, LPC/S

Program Manager, Quality Improvement Pee Dee Community Mental Health Center



# DR. EBONY GAFFNEY, MD, PHD, MBA

Executive and Medical Director Spartanburg Area Mental Health Center

### **HEATHER EVANS SMITH**

Photographer – and Exhibit Artist



AN EVENING CULTURAL EXPERIENCE FEATURING
The Art and Book Signing of Heather Evans Smith



9:00 - 11:00

# **CLOSING SPEAKER**

Vicarious Trauma
PATRICE PENNEY, MSW, LISW-CP-S
Clinical Assistant Professor
Coordinator, Trauma-Informed Practice Certificate

Approved Supervisor

# **BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!**

# **Membership Application**

Please complete the following membership form, detach and mail with dues to: MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON, ACCMHS P.O. BOX 1695 • COLUMBIA, SC 29202

Date	Membership expires
Name	
Street	
City	State Zip
Tel	Fax
Email	
Company	
All dı	ues and contributions are tax deductible.
Profession	nal disciplines:
Profession	nal Organizations:
Identify C	ross Cultural Issues of concern to you:
Are you wi	lling to serve on an Action Council Committee?
How did y	ou find out about Action Council?

# **Membership Fees**

Dues	Type Membership	Check One
\$15	Senior Citizen (age 65+)	
\$10	Student	
\$20	Individual	
\$50	Organization	
\$35	Family (2 or more)	
\$20	Board Member	

Additional Name(s)

Action Council For Cross Cultural Mental Health and Human Services P.O. Box 1695 Columbia, SC 29202

# THE ACTION COUNCIL FOR CROSS CULTURAL MENTAL HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

# 2026 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

### **CONFERENCE REFUND POLICY**

Cancellation requests MUST BE RECEIVED by MONDAY, February 10, 2026 to ensure a refund. An administrative fee of \$30.00 will be deducted from refunds. Substitutions are suggested instead of cancellations. *There will be no refunds after the conference*.

We recommend that you register online at our website www.crossculturalactioncouncil.org. https://cvent.me/4dzLKe

### PLEASE NOTE TICKETS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO ATTEND THIS CONFERENCE.

_Phone	_E-Mail	
_City	State	_Zip
_Work Phone		_State
_City		_ Zip
_Special Accommodation	s	
	_City _Work Phone _City	_CityState _Work Phone

Registration by February 7th: \$275 Full Conference (\$265 Action Council Members)

Registration After February 7th: \$300 • On Site Registration: \$350 • One Day Registration: \$150

Student Registration: \$100 Full Conference / \$40 One Day

Individuals making on-site payment by State Agency Voucher System must bring a copy of voucher signed by approving authority as proof of payment.

We strive to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals, including individuals with disabilities to engage fully. To request reasonable accommodations, please contact Tracy Richardson at tracy.richardson@scdmh.org.

Requests for accommodations must be received before January 27, 2026

Please complete all sections of the conference registration form and mail along with payment or voucher, to:

The Action Council
P. O. Box 1695 • Columbia, SC 29202
Email: crossculture.action@gmail.com (or) Fax: 1-866-591-1820

Make Payable to: The Action Council
Visit our website at: www.crossculturalactioncouncil.org



# THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2025 - SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 2026 MYRTLE BEACH HILTON RESORT

10000 Myrtle Beach Club Drive • Myrtle Beach, South Carolina 29572

Reservations: 843-449-5000 • Group code when calling: MHH

<a href="https://book.passkey.com/gt/220933554?gtid=4fe25d68fa27ff7a47087e0fc43c88ea">https://book.passkey.com/gt/220933554?gtid=4fe25d68fa27ff7a47087e0fc43c88ea</a>