

VCA Annual Convention

***Making Meaning in Counseling: Strengthening
Connections, Transforming Lives!***

November 13-15, 2025
Norfolk Waterside Marriott



*Virginia Counselors Association
316 Hedges Cove Road
Yorktown, VA 23692
800-225-8103; vcaoffice@cox.net*

2025 CONVENTION AT-A-GLANCE

Making Meaning in Counseling: Strengthening Connections, Transforming Lives

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

6:00 PM – 9:00 PM Attendee Check-in & Tote Bag Pickup

Thursday, November 13, 2025

		CE Hour
7:30 AM – 5:00 PM	Convention Registration	
7:30 AM – 8:30 AM	Coffee & Breakfast Items	
7:30 AM – 5:00 PM	Silent Auction Items on Display	
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	VCA Marketplace	
7:30 AM – 8:30 AM	Session 1- Morning Mindfulness	1
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Welcome Space Open	
8:45 AM – 9:30 AM	VCA All-Member Business Meeting/Advocacy Update	
9:40 AM – 10:50 AM	Welcome & Keynote Speaker	1
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	Lunch on Your Own	
12:45 PM – 1:45 PM	Session 2	1
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Session 3	1
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM	Poster Sessions/Break	1
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Session 4	1
5:15 PM – 6:00 PM	Chapter/Division Meetings	
6:15 PM – 7:00 PM	Opening Night Attendee Reception	
7:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Chapter/Division-Attendee Receptions (Masquerade Ball Theme)	
8:30 PM – 9:30 PM	VCA President's Reception	

Friday, November 14, 2025

7:30 AM – 5:00 PM	Convention Registration	
7:30 AM – 8:30 AM	Coffee & Breakfast Items	
7:30 AM – 11:00 AM	Silent Auction Items on display	
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	VCA Marketplace	
7:30 AM – 8:30 AM	Session 5 - Morning Mindfulness	1
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Welcome Space Open	
8:45 AM – 9:45 AM	Session 6	1
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Session 7	1
11:15 AM – 12:45 PM	VCA Awards Ceremony & Luncheon	
1:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Silent Auction Pick-up	
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	Session 8	1
2:00 PM – 2:45 PM	Break	
2:45 PM – 3:45 PM	Session 9	1
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Session 10	1
8:00 PM – 10:00PM	Special Event – Music by DJ Dro	

Saturday, November 15, 2025

7:30 AM – 8:30 AM	Session 11 – Morning Mindfulness	1
7:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Convention Registration	
7:30 AM – 8:30 AM	Coffee & Breakfast Items	
8:45 AM – 9:45 AM	Session 12	1
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Session 13	1
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	Lunch on Your Own	
12:45 PM – 1:45 PM	Session 14	1
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Session 15	1

Total Possible NBCC CE hours 17

*All Convention meetings, events & receptions are open to every convention attendee.

President's Welcome



Welcome to the 2025 Virginia Counselors Association Convention, "Making Meaning in Counseling: Strengthening Connections and Transforming Lives." It is a privilege to gather with professionals who help people find hope, direction, and belonging through our shared work.

This theme reflects what I value most about counseling. Every day, we help people make meaning from challenges and change. As Friedrich Nietzsche wrote, "Those who have a 'why' to live can bear with almost any 'how.'" Our shared why is clear. We empower people to live well, grow with purpose, and move toward healthier relationships and communities. During this convention, I invite you to explore and name your personal why. Let the keynote, sessions, and conversations clarify what matters most to you, and how your daily practice can reflect that purpose in fresh, practical ways. That invitation is personal to me. I still remember walking into my first VCA convention and feeling both inspired and at home. It was the hallway conversations, the practical ideas I could use on Monday morning, and the sense that I had found my people. With that same

energy in mind, lean into this convention. Learn from colleagues whose passion drives innovation. Share moments of reflection that renew your purpose. Join conversations that remind us why we do this work. The energy of this community reminds us that we are never alone in this work. We are part of something larger; a profession built on empathy, courage, and human connection.

Grounded in that spirit, my presidency focuses on growing membership, deepening connections, increasing engagement, and recognizing the collective effort that keeps our association thriving. These aims reflect our mission to support, empower, and advocate for the diverse needs of counselors in Virginia, and our vision to strengthen professional identity through collaboration and innovative professional development.

None of this happens alone. I am grateful to our board, committees, presenters, volunteers, sponsors, chapter and division leaders, staff, and our executive director for the time, creativity, and care that made this event possible. Special thanks to our Convention Committee Chair, Sarah Tracy, for her leadership and countless hours of coordination. To every participant, thank you for showing up with openness and curiosity.

May this gathering remind you of your purpose, renew your sense of belonging, and reignite your passion for the meaningful work you do every day.

With appreciation,

Dr. Cory Gerwe
VCA President

GENERAL INFORMATION

Registration Desk Hours

On-site convention registration and check-in is located on the 3rd Floor, in the Presidential Foyer. Volunteer staff will be able to assist pre-registered participants. VCA Staff will be able to assist with on-site registration and other needs, such as convention receipts or membership renewal/confirmation. Presenters and exhibitor check-in and support will also be available:

Wednesday, November 12, 6:00 PM—9:00 PM

Thursday, November 13, 7:30 AM—5:00 PM

Friday, November 14, 7:30 AM—5:00 PM

Saturday, November 15, 7:30 AM—1:00 PM

National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)

VCA is an NBCC approved provider (2047) of continuing education for National Certified Counselors. Forms for documenting NBCC credit, up to 17.0 continuing education hours are in your convention tote bag. This documentation is only applicable to those holding NBCC certificates.

Certificate of Participation

All registered participants will receive a certificate of participation. The certificate can be used to document up to 17.0 continuing education hours for licensure renewal and recertification by LPCs and School Counselors. A certificate can be found in your convention bag.

General Consent and Image Release

VCA will take photos of attendees throughout the VCA Convention. These photos are for VCA use only and may appear on the VCA website, newsletter, brochures, social media outlets, or other future VCA promotional material. By virtue of your attendance, you agree to usage of your likeness in such media. Attendees who do not wish to have their image recorded for distribution should make their wishes known to the VCA Office at vcaoffice@cox.net, in writing and include a photo. VCA will use the photo solely for identification purposes to comply with the attendee's request.

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12:1

Student-Faculty Ratio

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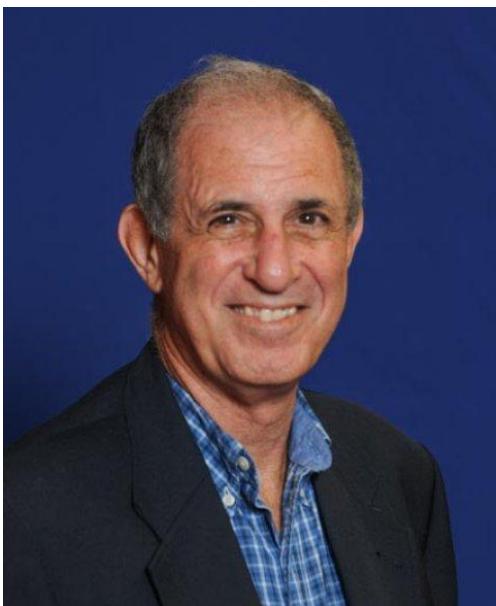
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Thursday Keynote Speaker – Dr. Ed Neukrug

9:50 AM – 10:50 AM

Strengthening Connections and Transforming Lives



Strengthening Connections and Transforming Lives will explore ways in which we connect, and strengthen our relationships with other counselors, our clients, and significant people in our lives. Here we will examine the personality characteristics that counselors share which makes us special and more likely to connect with one another; the importance of embracing therapeutic common factors, and evidence-based practices (EBPs), critical to growth producing relationships and positive outcomes with clients; and specific ideas and philosophies, from a wide variety of counseling theories, that can help us practice self-care and deepen our relationships with our family, friends, and significant others.

Learning Objectives: 1) To be able to articulate specific personality traits that are unique to most counselors and the importance of embracing those counselors who do not have those same qualities. 2) To understand the importance of evidence-based practice (EBP), and common factors (CF) to all therapeutic approaches, in strengthening relationships with our clients and demonstrating positive client outcomes. 3) To examine how a wide variety of counseling theories offer ideas regarding self-care, improving relationships with others, and deepening those relationships we currently

have.

Biography - Dr. Ed Neukrug is the Batten Endowed Chair of Counseling at Old Dominion University, a Fellow of the American Counseling Association (ACA), and was bestowed the Hohenshil Publication Award from ACA. A licensed professional counselor and licensed psychologist, he has experience in a wide variety of settings, has taught for over 40 years, and is a nationally known author, presenter, and researcher. He is also the Executive Director of the International Institute for the Advancement of Counseling Theory (IiACT).

Born and raised in New York City, Dr. Ed Neukrug obtained his B.A. in psychology from SUNY Binghamton, his M.S. in counseling from Miami University of Ohio, and his doctorate in counselor education from the University of Cincinnati. In addition to teaching, Dr. Neukrug has worked as a counselor at a crisis center, an outpatient therapist at a mental health center, an associate school psychologist, a school counselor, and as a private practice psychologist and licensed professional counselor. Dr. Neukrug has held a variety of positions in local, state, regional, and national professional associations in counseling and human services.

Dr. Neukrug has written over 100 articles and chapters in books and has published 15 books, including: (1) *Counseling Theory and Practice* (3rd ed.) (2) *The World of the Counselor* (6th. ed.), (3) *Experiencing the World of the Counselor: A Workbook for Counselor Educators and Students* (4th ed.), (4) *Theory, Practice and Trends in Human Services: An Introduction to An Emerging Profession* (7th ed.), (5) *Skills and Techniques for Human Service Professionals* (2nd ed.), (6) *Skills and Tools for Today's Counselor's and Psychotherapists*, (7) *Essentials of Testing and Assessment for Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists* (3rd ed., enhanced), (8) *A Brief Orientation to Counseling: Professional Identity, History, and Standards* (3rd ed.), (9) *the Dictionary of Counseling and Human Services*, (10) *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Theory in Counseling and Psychotherapy*, (11) *Counseling and Helping Skills*, (12) *Contemporary theories of counseling and psychotherapy*, (13) *Foundations of Clinical Mental Health Counseling*, (14) *Psychopharmacology and Brain Transforming Interventions for Mental Health Professionals*, and (15) *Essentials of Theories in Counseling and Psychotherapy: A Practical Guide* (December, 2026). You can find most of his books at www.counselingbooksetc.com or visit the Cognella Academic Press or Cengage Publishing websites. Dr. Neukrug has also developed a website for IiACT as well as several interactive websites on counseling, all of which can be found at www.odu.edu/iiact. Dr. Neukrug has two children, Hannah and Emma.

**This keynote presentation counts towards one (1) NBCC continuing education hour
Located in Norfolk Ballroom 1-4 (First Floor)**

Special Events...

Welcome Space

Presidential Foyer, Madison Room, 3rd Floor
Thursday & Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Saturday, 8:00 am – 1:00 pm

The Welcoming Committee invites you to a serene space for reflection, rejuvenation, and respite during the conference. This space will offer various self-care activities, designed to help you relax and recharge amidst the busy schedule. Whether you stay for a few minutes or a few hours, you'll find a welcoming environment to nurture your well-being. Sponsored by the Virginia Counselors for Social Justice (VA-CSJ).

VCA Marketplace

Thursday & Friday, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
First Floor Foyer & Hallway
Third Floor Foyer & Hallway

Come experience an interactive opportunity for idea and information exchange, knowledge sharing, and learning. The VCA Marketplace features exhibitors offering the opportunity to learn about products, services, and ideas that you can use every day in your workplace.

**VCA Annual Members' Meeting
And Advocacy Update**
Thursday, 8:45 am – 9:30 am
Norfolk Ballroom 1-4, First Floor

This is your opportunity to be involved in YOUR professional organization. The annual business meeting offers members a forum to interact with VCA leadership, address any questions, and take care of business. VCA Lobbyist, Becky Bowers-Lanier will also provide a snapshot of the current challenges and opportunities for counselors in Virginia and provide information on the VCA Legislative Agenda for the coming year.

VCA Chapter & Division Meetings
Thursday, 5:15 – 6:00 pm
Third & Fourth Floors

Come meet and network with colleagues who live right in your neighborhood and/or share similar interests.

HRCA - Hampton Roads Chapter-**Marriott V** (4th)
LACA - Lynchburg Chapter - **Marriott II** (4th)
RACA - Richmond Chapter - **Marriott III** (4th)
ROACA - Roanoke Chapter - **Marriott VII** (4th)
VACES-Counselor Ed Supervision-**Hampton I** (3rd)
VAMCD - Multicultural & Development – **Hampton II** (3rd)
VA-CSJ – Social Justice – **Marriott VI** (4th)
VCCA – Clinical Counselors – **Hampton III** (3rd)
VASC – School Counseling – **Hampton VI** (3rd)
VAAC - Addiction Counselors – **Marriott I** (4th)

**ALL receptions are open to
EVERYONE!!**

Opening Night Attendee Reception

Thursday, 6:15 pm – 7:00 pm
Hampton Ballroom IV & V, Third Floor

Please join us for the opening night reception! Have fun reminiscing with all your VCA friends and colleagues. Meet VCA President, Dr. Cory Gerwe, along with many other current and past VCA leaders. Enjoy some snack items and a cash bar.

VCA Chapter & Division Receptions

Thursday, 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Everyone is invited to stop by the VCA Chapter and Division receptions. This year's reception theme is *Masquerade Ball*. Feel free to come dressed in your favorite masquerade attire.

7:00 pm – 7:45 pm

Richmond (RACA) - Suite 616

VASGW & NVCA – Suite 606

HRCA & VA-CSJ & VA-SAIGE – Suite 420

7:45 pm – 8:30 pm

VACES – Suite 2420

VCCA & VASC – Suite 2416

ROACA & CVCA – Suite 426

Lynchburg (LACA) – Suite 416

From 8:30 - 9:30 pm, the receptions finish up with the **VCA Presidents' Reception**. VCA President, Dr. Cory Gerwe will be the host in Suite 2316

Silent Auction
Presidential Foyer - Third Floor
Bids close Friday @ 11:00 am

Don't miss your chance to bid on wonderful items at this year's silent auction. The winning bids will be announced at the end of the VCA Awards Ceremony & Luncheon at 12:40 pm. Items can be picked up and paid for at the registration desk, located on the Third Floor, Presidential Foyer, until 5:00 pm on Friday.

Music by DJ Dro

Friday, 8:00-10:00 PM - Norfolk Ballroom 1-4

Party, Party, Party!! All attendees at the conference are invited! This event is dedicated to Hampton Roads Counseling Association (HRCA) in celebration of their Diamond Jubilee - 75 years!

VCA Chapter, Division & Committee Tables
Thursday & Friday - First Floor Hallway

Advocacy Committee

Adrienne Randle, Chair; advocacy@vacounselors.org
VCA Lobbyist, Debra Rodman; debra@debrarodman.com

Membership Committee

Risi Green-Baker, Chair; risigreen@hotmail.com

Central Valley Counselors Association (CVCA)
gillies11@sbc.edu; <http://www.mycvca.com>

Hampton Roads Counselors Association (HRCA)
hrca3105@gmail.com;
<http://hamptonroadscounselors.org>

Lynchburg Area Counselors Association (LACA)
counselormarisajones@gmail.com;
www.facebook.com/lacavca

Northern Virginia Counselors Association (NVCA)
nvcaofvca@gmail.com;
sites.google.com/view/nvcaofvca

Rappahannock Counselors Association (RCA)
wrights21@vcu.edu

VA Counselor Education/Supervision (VACES)
bricheson@liberty.edu; <http://www.vaces.org>

Virginia Counselors for Social Justice (VA-CSJ)
jleiva2@gmu.edu

VA Multicultural Counseling & Development (VAMCD)
pchin@barry.edu; www.facebook.com/VAMCD4All

Virginia Alliance for School Counseling (VASC)
christina.quinn@campbell.k12.va.us; vca-vasc.org

VA Assoc. Specialist in Group Work (VASGW)
tmasonvca@aol.com;
[https://sites.google.com/view/vasgw](http://sites.google.com/view/vasgw)

Virginia Clinical Counselors Alliance (VCCA)
wellness.for.wellness@gmail.com

Awards Ceremony & Luncheon

Friday, 11:15 am – 12:45 pm

Norfolk Ballroom 1-4, First Floor

Take time to honor your fellow colleagues' significant contributions to the counseling profession at VCA's Annual Awards Luncheon. VCA awards include the *John R. Cook Award*, *Humanitarian and Caring Person of the Year*, *Chapter of the Year* and *Division of the Year*. (Additionally, VCA Chapter and Division Members of the Year, Michele Dowdy Student Awardees, BIPOC Awardees, Pete Warren Fellows, and Suzee Leone Grant Recipients are recognized)

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Session Descriptions



Virginia Counselors Association (VCA) has been approved by NBCC as an Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 2047. Programs that do not qualify for NBCC credit are clearly identified. Virginia Counselors Association (VCA) is solely responsible for all aspects of the program.

All presentations count towards one (1) CE hour unless otherwise marked.

Session 1

Thursday, November 13, 2025, 7:30 AM – 8:30 AM

T100 - Morning Mindfulness Practice Group

Presenter: Alan Forrest, EdD, LPC, LMFT

Frank/Shang/York

Mindfulness is present moment awareness and the art of conscious living. It is the intentional attending to what is happening right now without judgment or reactivity. This morning practice group will provide an opportunity for participants to have a place to begin their day in stillness and silence; it can serve as a calming touchstone to return to throughout the day. The structure of the practice session will consist of a welcome, lightly guided period, and silent sit. We are all each other's teachers; therefore, we will conclude with an optional open discussion. Beginners and seasoned meditation practitioners are welcome. This is a gentle way to begin your day.

Session Keynote

Thursday, November 13, 2025, 9:50 AM – 10:50 AM

Keynote - Counselors: Strengthening Connections and Transforming Lives

Presenter: Ed Neukrug, Ed.D., LPC

Norfolk Ballroom 1-4

Strengthening Connections and Transforming Lives will explore ways in which we connect, and strengthen our relationships with other counselors, our clients, and significant people in our lives. Here we will examine the personality characteristics that counselors share which makes us special and more likely to connect with one another; the importance of embracing therapeutic common factors, and evidence-based practices (EBPs), critical to growth producing relationships and positive outcomes with clients; and specific ideas and philosophies, from a wide variety of counseling theories, that can help us practice self-care and deepen our relationships with our family, friends, and significant others.

Session 2

Thursday, November 13, 2025, 12:45 PM – 1:45 PM

T200 - The Supervision Mirror: Creating Reflective, Relational, and Real-Time Growth

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in CLINICAL SUPERVISION

Presenter: Sharde' O'Rourke, LPC, LMFT, LSATP, CCTP, PAI, SAP

Co-Presenters: Shameka Brown LPC-R; Sange Thompson LPC-R

Hampton I

Supervision is a mirror, not a microphone. This session explores how supervisors can hold up insight, accountability, and cultural attunement through structured reflection and intentional challenge. Learn how to guide supervisees into deeper awareness of their patterns, triggers, biases, and power, while building their professional confidence and voice.

T201 – The Space Between Us: Ethics, Identity, and the Healing Relationship

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Danielle L. McDowell, M.S., LPC-S

Hampton II

This workshop explores how counselor identity, power, and privilege impact the therapeutic relationship. Participants will examine ethical responsibilities related to bias and culture and gain practical tools to strengthen relational integrity and cultural responsiveness in diverse clinical settings.

T202- Mitigating Compassion Fatigue: Our wellness for client wellness (Sponsored by VCCA)

Presenter: Elizabeth O'Neill Hunter, Ph.D., LPC-S

Hampton III

This session provides education about compassion fatigue, including differentiation, contributing factors, and assessment tools. The session explores our ethical obligations to care for ourselves. As well as the role our wellness plays in the clinical outcomes of our clients. The session closes with personalized strategies to address compassion fatigue.

T203- Different Coping Resources, Different Outcomes: What Counselors Can Do to Support Parents of Children with Autism

Presenter: Naomi J. Wheeler, PhD, LPC

Hampton VI

Parents of children with ASD face emotional and systemic challenges shaped by ableism. This study identified caregiver coping and support profiles linked to mental health outcomes. Findings highlight the need for holistic, family-focused approaches, emphasizing social support, non-avoidant coping, and counselor-led psychoeducation to reduce distress and foster resilience in these families.

T204- Target 2 Zero: Innovative and Streamlined Traumatic Stress Treatment (Part 1 of 2)

Presenter: Scarlett Williams, LPC

Hampton VII C E L L E D

Target 2 Zero (T2Z) is a rapid trauma protocol combining EMDR, movement therapy, and neuroscience research. Unlike traditional EMDR requiring extensive training and individual sessions, T2Z can be self-directed or group-administered in under 15 minutes without discussing traumatic memories. Designed to reduce burnout among mental health professionals and other high-stress professions, participants will learn the theoretical foundation and experience the T2Z Rapid Stress Response technique.

T205- Counseling in the Era of Artificial Intelligence: A Call for Ethical Use, Cultural Humility, and Social Justice

Presenter: Ben Newman, Ph.D., LPC, LSATP

Co-Presenter: Abigail Williams LPC, CSAC, ATR-BC

Hampton VIII

Explore the rapidly evolving role of artificial intelligence (AI) in mental health care. This session offers practical guidance for ethically integrating AI tools while centering cultural humility and social justice in counseling practice. Learn to critically assess emerging technologies and protect the heart of the therapeutic relationship.

T206- Exemplary Practices for Counseling Sexology and Sexual Wellness

Presenter: Amber L. Pope, PhD, LPC, LMHC

Co-Presenter: Bianca R. Augustine, PhD, LPC, CCTP

Marriott I

Two co-authors of the Exemplary Practices for Counseling Sexology and Sexuality Counseling will provide an overview of each practice area to attendees. We invite the audience to engage in self-reflexivity and identify strategies for improving their own practice in sexuality counseling, concluding with a case study for application.

Silver Sponsor

T207- Concordism as a Model for Helping Christian Parents Affirm of Their Gender-Expansive Children in Virginia (Part 1 of 2)

Presenter: Charles F. Shepard, PhD, NCC, LPC

Marriott II

Christian parents of transgender or gender-expansive (TGE) youth living in Virginia often struggle to reconcile religious practice and affirmation of their child's gender identity. This session provides a means of integrating science and spirituality that improves the odds of positive mental health outcomes for TGE youth in The Commonwealth.

T208- Oops, My Bad!

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Holly Tracy, LPC, LMFT, ACS, RPT-S, CTTS, CT, NCC

Marriott III

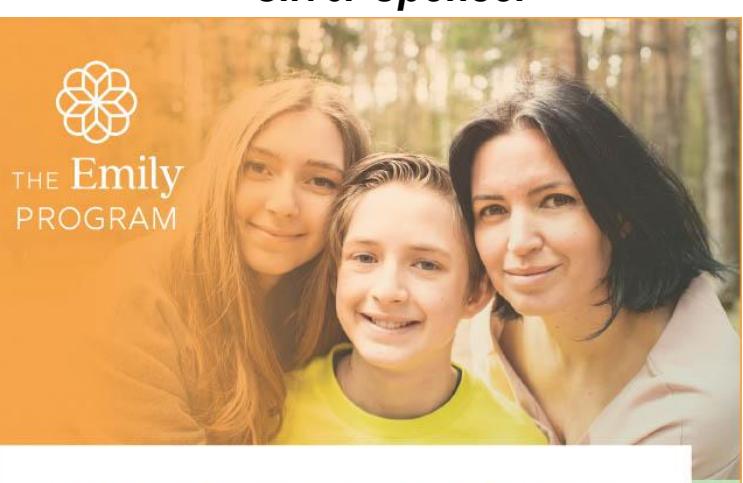
When ethical dilemmas occur, an ethical code will be violated regardless of the course of action (ACA). Without awareness of dilemmas and decision-making models one is ill prepared. Recognizing what increases vulnerability, knowing potential violations, and having a plan helps increase counselor confidence and minimize harm to clients.

T209- Understanding Basic and Advanced Concepts Associative with Considering Opening and Maintaining Your Own Private Practice

Presenter: Mike Takacs, PhD, EdS, LPC-S

Marriott V

Owning and operating a private practice can be both a rewarding and challenging experience. There are a multitude of factors that should be considered in what directions and decisions should be made for its continued success with owners often facing these alone. This lecture provides insight into this potential journey.



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T210- Healing the Bonds that Hurt Us: Attachment Wounds and Intimate Partner Violence

Presenter: Justin Jordan, PhD., LPC, LSATP

Co-Presenter: Anna Grace Dorsey, BS

Marriott VI

Intimate partner violence (IPV) in romantic relationships is correlated with insecure attachment styles developed during childhood. Counselors should be knowledgeable about attachment theory in working with individuals and couples experiencing IPV. This session will explore how attachment style affects anxiety, avoidance, and security in intimate partnerships, as well as counseling strategies for supporting clients who are survivors or perpetrators of IPV.

T211- Addressing Grief in the Room: Diagnostic and Treatment Challenges in Grief and Depression

Presenter: Ellen Winsor Chaffin, CGC, LPC-Res

Co-Presenter: Bryan J. Prinzivalli, LPC-S, LMFT-S, ACS, A-D/HD-CCSP, EMDR-T

Marriott VII

Though they often present with similar symptomology, prolonged grief, and Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) have different etiological and treatment considerations that are critical to effective clinical care. This presentation discusses an assessment and treatment protocol for the differential diagnosis and clinical management of prolonged grief and major depression in diverse populations.

T212 – My Favorite Interventions (Part 1 of 2)

Presenter: Cynthia Miller, PhD., LPC

Frank/Shang/York

Clients often come to counseling with problems that call for more than active listening, empathy, and unconditional positive regard - they need practical tools. This session reviews 8 interventions counselors can use to help clients manage anxiety, trauma reactions, and unhealthy thinking patterns, while building their self-understanding.

T213 – Breaking the Cycle: Addressing Generational Trauma from Sexual Abuse

Presenter: Faye Barner, PhD, LPC, LSATP, CSOTP

Co-Presenters: Tinyia Harris, Resident in Counseling; Marquetta Williams, Graduate Student

Chesapeake

This session explores how unprocessed sexual abuse trauma is transmitted across generations, influencing emotional health, relationships, and family dynamics. Participants will learn trauma-informed, culturally responsive interventions for addressing intergenerational trauma in clinical settings, using evidence-based modalities such as TF-CBT, EMDR, IFS, and narrative therapy.

Session 3

Thursday, November 13, 2025, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

T300 Socially-Just ACTion: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy as a Liberating and Social Justice-Oriented Treatment Modality

Presenter: Bianca R. Augustine, PhD, LPC, CCTP

Co-Presenter: Jasmine Griffith, PhD., Resident in Counseling

Hampton I

In today's sociopolitical climate, the need for socially just, liberating treatment approaches is of utmost importance. In this interactive session, presenters will provide an overview of ACT as a socially just modality, highlight ways to facilitate liberatory healing through ACT, and explore ACT empowering, affirming ACT interventions for marginalized clients.

T301 – Depressive Disorder Among African American and Minority Seniors: Ethical Considerations in Culturally Responsive Mental Health Care

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Shon D. Smith, EdD, MS, LMHC, LCAS-A, LSC, CRC

Co-Presenters: Cecilia R. Tucker, BSBA; Kerri C. Legette McCullough, E.D., LPC, LCPC, LCMHC, NCC

Hampton II

This presentation explores ethical considerations and culturally responsive approaches in diagnosing and treating depressive disorders among African American and minority seniors. By examining disparities, cultural competence requirements, and ethical frameworks for vulnerable populations, this analysis addresses critical gaps in mental health care equity and culturally informed treatment practices.

T302 - Role of the Counselor: Remediating Physician Residents and Medical Students with Lapses in Professionalism

Presenter: Agatha Parks-Savage, EdD, LPC, ACS

Co-Presenters: Cory Gerwe, PhD, LPC, ACS; LaConda Fanning, PsyD, LPC, ACS; Daniel St. John, PhD

Hampton III

When there are lapses in professionalism with physician residents and medical students, counselors are equipped to facilitate the remediation process utilizing their knowledge of identity formation and interpersonal growth. We will share how we use a combination of early assessment and coaching to promote professional development.

T303 – The Impact of Makeup on Mental Health: Exploring Confidence, Identity, and Well-being

Presenter: Joanne Frederick, E.D., NCC, LPC-DC, VA, LCPC-MD

Co-Presenter: Kristina Atkinson, Neuroscience, B.S.; Ammal Mahmood, Psychology, B.S.

Hampton VI

In this session, participants will be invited to explore how makeup influences mental health by enhancing self-esteem, fostering identity expression, and supporting emotional resilience. Attendees will learn about the psychological effects of makeup and practical ways to integrate these insights into therapeutic and support settings.

T304- Target 2 Zero: Innovative and Streamlined Traumatic Stress Treatment (Part 2 of 2)

Presenter: Scarlett Williams, LPC

Hampton V

Target 2 Zero (T2Z) is a rapid trauma protocol combining EMDR, movement therapy, and neuroscience research. Unlike traditional EMDR requiring extensive training and individual sessions, T2Z can be self-directed or group-administered in under 15 minutes without discussing traumatic memories. Designed to reduce burnout among mental health professionals and other high-stress professions, participants will learn the theoretical foundation and experience the T2Z Rapid Stress Response technique.

ALL GENDER RESTROOM

The all gender restroom is next to the Presidential Foyer, on the third floor of the Norfolk Waterside Marriott. It will be identified with the below signage.



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**Celebrating Over 30 Years of Service
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VCA Convention
2025

Congratulations to the 2025 VCAF Award Recipients!

John Cook Award Dr. Terri Mason

Pete Warren Fellows

Jackson Crowe - University of Lynchburg

Ajayla Evins - Old Dominion University

Alexis Kauffman - College of William and Mary

Cheri Keene - Bluefield University

Anna Keesee - Longwood University

Elizabeth Kurt - Virginia Commonwealth University

Glory Munthali - College of William and Mary

Ariela Papp - College of William and Mary

Samantha Redd - Regent University

Christine Turner - Old Dominion University

VCAF Spring Grant Recipients

Kadie King (LPC), Rocktown Counseling, LLC

Amy Burns (LPC), Emory and Henry University

Miranda Martin (MED, School Counselor), Montgomery
County Schools

Sonnet Conner, Seeking Wellness Counseling Services

Samantha Redd (MA), Tea and Empathy Counseling, LLC

**Join us for our grant-writing
session:**

Friday, November 14

4 p.m., Room Frank/Shang/York

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T305 – Bearing the Weight: Understanding and Addressing Family Caregiving Burden in Counseling

Presenter: Judith Wambui Preston, PhD, LPC, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH

Co-Presenter: Radha Horton-Parker, Ph.D., NCC, NCSC

Hampton VIII

This session explores the mental health impact of family caregiving burden, with attention to cultural and systemic factors.

Participants will gain practical counseling strategies to support caregivers, enhance meaning-making, and advocate for change. Ideal for counselors across settings seeking to strengthen connections and improve care-giver well-being.

T306 Access Granted: Integrating Diverse Ability with Counselor Identity (Sponsored by VA-CSJ)

Presenter: Jessica Johnson, M.A., NCC, Resident in Counseling

Marriott I

Counselors with lived experience of disability is a missing/overlooked subgroup within the profession, and engagement in services among the Black and Latino communities is limited because many clients do not see professionals who "look like them" or "can relate"; because disability is a wide spectrum often co-occurring with mental health disorders, it is vital to explore stereotypes, experiences, legal and financial priorities navigated within this population in order to reframe and empower the voice and ability in safe spaces.

T307- Concordism as a Model for Helping Christian Parents Affirm of Their Gender-Expansive Children in Virginia (Part 2 of 2)

Presenter: Charles F. Shepard, PhD, NCC, LPC

Marriott II

Christian parents of transgender or gender-expansive (TGE) youth living in Virginia often struggle to reconcile religious practice and affirmation of their child's gender identity. This session provides a means of integrating science and spirituality that improves the odds of positive mental health outcomes for TGE youth in The Commonwealth.

T308 – Update from the Board of Counseling

Presenter: Gerard Lawson, Ph.D., LPC, LSATP

Co-Presenter: Jamie Hoyle, Esquire

Marriott III

This presentation will highlight progress toward the Counseling Compact's implementation in Virginia, developing guidance on the use of AI, insight into disciplinary trends, and feedback from a survey of supervisors and supervisees in Virginia.

T309 – Meaningful parts: Military Moral Injury, Existentialism, and IFS

Presenter: Corde Miles, M. Ed, Resident in Counseling

Marriott V

Moral injury has increased in research popularity, yet practitioners often have difficulties recognizing it within clinical populations. This session offers a focused discussion of moral injury and introduces a humanistic framework integrating elements of existentialism and internal family systems to help service members engage in parts work and meaning-making.

T310 – Heart is the Hero: How Our Heart Influences Relationships, Resiliency, and Regulation

Presenter: Austin Francis, LPC, CCTP, C-DBT

Marriott VI

This session focuses on the science behind how our heart rhythms influence the electromagnetic energy in our bodies and the ways we connect in relationships with others. Through applying the science of our bodies to an attachment lens, we can more effectively seek true connection in our relationships.

T311 – Meditation for Counselors: Professional and Personal Applications

Presenter: Alan Forrest, Ed.D., LPC, LMFT

Marriott VII

Mindfulness meditation offers counselors many benefits, both professionally and personally. It helps improve and increase self-awareness, mitigate vicarious trauma, increase compassion for others and for self, improve emotional self-regulation, and provide a sense of resilience and well-being. This presentation will examine how mindfulness can help effectively manage the emotional consequences of working with clients and nurture a more grounded and resilient approach to our work.

T312 – My Favorite Interventions (Part 2 of 2)

Presenter: Cynthia Miller, Ph.D., LPC

Frank/Shang/York

Clients often come to counseling with problems that call for more than active listening, empathy, and unconditional positive regard - they need practical tools. This session reviews 8 interventions counselors can use to help clients manage anxiety, trauma reactions, and unhealthy thinking patterns, while building their self-understanding.

T313 – Ethical & Efficient: Practical AI Tools to Enhance Your Counseling Practice

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Trina Young Greer, Psy.D., LCP, LPC, LMFT

Co-Presenters: Steven Greer, B.S. COO Genesis Counseling Center, Inc.; Shelby Debause, M.A. LMFT; Cameron Ashworth, M.A.

Chesapeake

Discover how AI can transform your counseling practice by saving time, boosting productivity, and expanding your impact. This session offers hands-on strategies for ethically using AI to streamline documentation, enhance client engagement, and simplify marketing so you can focus more on clinical excellence and less on administrative overload.

Poster Session

Thursday, November 13, 2025, 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

All posters will be presented in Norfolk IV & count towards .5 CE Hours

#1 Stronger Together: Benefits of Interdisciplinary Training for Counselors

Presenter: Denise Hall LPC, CRC, NCC

Co-Presenters: Kaylee Botset, graduate student; Miguel King, graduate student; Grace Kye, graduate student

This poster will discuss an interdisciplinary intervention project for emerging adults post-release from juvenile detention facilities by providing supported employment, mental health interventions, and peer support. We will explore the advantages of interdisciplinary work for counselors and best practices to facilitate effective teams. Implications for counselors will be discussed.

#2 Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Perinatal Mental Health

Presenter: Denise Hall, LPC, CRC, NCC

Co-Presenters: Courtney Holmes, Ph.D., LPC, LMFT, CRC; Becca Gregory, graduate student; Grace Banazek, graduate student

Depression, anxiety, and PTSD are commonly observed in postpartum people, which was further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This session will highlight current research and provide clinical sessions to help counselors be effective in counseling parents, children, and families who remain impacted by their birthing experiences in the pandemic.

#3 Unspoken Wounds: Exploring Generational Trauma in Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities

Presenter: Brooke Velozo, M.A., LPC

This poster examines generational trauma in Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities through a trauma-informed lens, emphasizing the psychological, relational, and cultural dynamics that shape inherited trauma. Highlighting the importance of understanding cultural values in therapeutic contexts, barriers to care, and how historical experiences manifest in intergenerational patterns.

#4 Parent Like a Pro: Everyday Therapeutic Tools That Transform Families

Presenter: Shaquana Smith, QMHP-C, LGPC, NCC

This presentation prepares clinicians to educate parents in evidence-based therapeutic interventions for the home setting. Attendees will learn how to keep interventions culturally respectful and work around real-world challenges like time and money. Interventions will be practical, flexible, and empowering for all families.

#5 When Law and Ethics Collide: Emerging Trends and Considerations regarding Values-Based Counseling

Presenter: Kim Hughes, M.A., Ed.S.

Co-Presenter: Glory Munthali, NCC, CSA

Litigation regarding values-based counseling in the context of academia has increased over the past decade. While courts have dismissed these cases, emerging case law and legislation indicates that values-based counseling may be increasingly protected. This poster presentation provides a historical overview, details emerging trends, and extends practical considerations and implications.

#6 Holding Hope: Counseling Strategies for Supporting those Experiencing Infertility or Baby Loss

Presenter: Courtney A. Nishnick, PMH-C, CSAC, Resident in Counseling (VA)

Co-Presenter: Ajayla Evins, M.S., CRC, NCC, Resident in Counseling (VA)

This poster explores challenges faced by those who have lost a baby, highlighting gaps in counseling competencies and societal awareness. It emphasizes the need for specialized support, tailored counseling approaches, and enhanced professional training to improve mental health care and provide compassionate, effective support for this underserved population.

#7 The Final Formation

Presenter: Yesenia Llera, MA

Co-Presenter: Jacqueline Samuelson

This session focuses on our group project's mission to support veterans transitioning from military to civilian life. We will discuss key challenges, innovative solutions, and collaborative strategies to enhance career opportunities, community integration, and overall well-being. Join us as we refine our approach to empowering veterans in their next chapter.

Session 4

Thursday, November 13, 2025, 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

T400 – The Sex Talk: Couples' Counseling When Sex is Painful for the Female Partner Due to a Medical Condition

Presenter: Holly Tracy LMFT, LPC, ACS, CTTS, CT

Hampton I

Dyspareunia, pain during intercourse, has far-reaching implications for couple dynamics and relational satisfaction. Shame, guilt, and lack of education prevent healthy communication, decreasing intimacy and increasing strain. Therapeutic interventions, safe and open dialogues regarding "private pain" can help couples gain a strong emotional connection and work towards healthier relational outcomes

Silver Sponsor

T401 – Attachment Styles & Mental Health: Ethical and Clinical Implications

*This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in
ETHICS*

Presenter: Dr. Jacqueline Butler, LCSW,
LSATP, CCTP-II

Hampton II

This training explores the intersection of attachment theory and mental health, highlighting how early relational patterns affect emotional regulation, psychological resilience, and therapeutic engagement. Participants will examine the clinical use of attachment frameworks, evidence-based interventions, and ethical considerations such as boundaries, transference, and clinician self-awareness.

T402 – Healing for the Healer: How Tending to Your Own Mental and Emotional Health Fuels Professional Growth

Presenter: Rosa Jones, LPC

Hampton III

This powerful workshop affirms that ethical, impactful counseling begins with a healed and whole practitioner. Participants will explore how emotional self-awareness, vulnerability, and personal growth enhance their professional work without crossing clinical boundaries. Ideal for counselors at all levels seeking authenticity, sustainability, and integrity in the healing profession.

T403 – The Black Church and Mental

Health (Sponsored by VA-CSJ)

Presenter: Joanne Frederick, ED.D., LPC,
LCPC

Co-Presenter: Richard Machado, Graduate Student

Hampton VI

This presentation highlights a church in Maryland that is operated by Licensed Professional Counselors. The Church houses a mental health clinic and incorporates mental health awareness, internships, and services throughout.

Help Light the Way for Children's Mental Health



Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters (CHKD), Virginia's only free-standing pediatric hospital, is now hiring for Licensed Professional Counselors at our five mental health locations including CHKD's Children's Pavilion in Norfolk.

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T404 – Don’t Eat, Just Leap – Restrictive Eating Disorders and Counseling Approaches for Aesthetic Sport Athletes

Presenter: Jennifer Gerlach, Ph.D., NCC, Resident in Counseling

Co-Presenter: Parris Hague, B.S. in Psychology, Master's student

Hampton VII

Many children and adolescents participate in aesthetic sports like dance, gymnastics, cheerleading, and others from an early age. As youth become more engaged in these sports, emphasis on weight and physical appearance may lead to disordered eating. Come learn about prevention and intervention strategies for these youth and adult athletes.

T405 – Coping with Uncertainty: Helping Others (and Ourselves!) Make Meaning in an Uncertain World

Presenter: Radha Horton-Parker, Ph.D., NCC, NCSC

Co-Presenter: Judith Wambui Preston, PhD, LPC, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH

Hampton VIII

We will explore how changes in our world create uncertainty and influence our functioning and wellbeing. Using the professional literature and personal experiences of the presenters and attendees, we will consider the nature, sources, and impacts of uncertainty; and strategies to help clients and ourselves make meaning and thrive during tumultuous times.

T406 – A Review of the State of Sexuality Counseling Training in Counselor Education

Presenter: Julia L. Lancaster, PhD, LPC, ACS

Co-Presenter: Amber L. Pope, PhD, LPC, LMHC

Marriott I

Although sexuality counseling training has increased over the past two decades, many counselors feel unprepared to address sexuality in therapy. In this session, we will review how to integrate sex positivity and sexual health frameworks into counselor training to reflect contemporary and multidimensional understandings of sexuality based in current research.

T407 – Feminist Intersectional Therapy: Fourth Wave Clinical Applications

Presenter: Kathleen McCleskey, PhD, NCC

Marriott II

Feminist Intersectional Therapy (FIT) is a 4th wave evolution of feminist theory integrated with intersectional theory that is very relevant for today's world. This new counseling conceptualization systemically contextualizes clients' experiences and offers navigational tools through oppressive systems. Specific FIT techniques will be shared for various clinical settings and modalities.

T408 – Ethics in Action: Using the ACA Ethical Decision-Making Model to Reduce Risk in School Counseling Practice

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Sophia Sills-Taylor, Ph.D., LPC

Co-Presenter: Ularisi Green-Baker, Ph.D., LPC

Marriott III

School counselors regularly navigate complex ethical dilemmas. This session teaches participants to apply the ACA Ethical Decision-Making Model to real-life scenarios in school settings providing a framework for thoughtful action, clear documentation, and professional protection in ethically gray situations.

T409 – Balancing Growth and Connection in Mental Health Counseling (Pete Warren Fellow)

Presenter: Glory Munthali, MA, MS, NCC, PhD candidate

Marriott V

This panel explores the tension between professional growth and authentic relational connection in counseling practice. Presenters will share insights on navigating burnout, maintaining presence, and integrating cultural humility, self-care, and supervision to foster sustainable and ethically grounded counseling work.

T410 – The New American Experience: Counseling Through the Lens of Immigration & Refugee Trauma (Pete Warren Fellow)

Presenter: Samantha Redd, M.A.

Co-Presenter: JaNae' Taylor, Ph.D.

Marriott VI

This session equips counselors with culturally responsive tools to effectively support immigrant and refugee clients. Participants will explore trauma differentiation, acculturation models, and discover how Culturally Adapted Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CA-CBT) can be applied to navigate trauma, acculturative stress, and identity challenges. The session highlights the importance of integrating clients' cultural values, enhancing trust, and tailoring interventions to honor diverse traditions and family dynamics. Gain practical strategies that foster belonging and empower you to meet the unique needs of the New American experience with confidence and compassion.

T411 – Unburdened: The Reclamation Theory As A Culturally Grounded Framework for Transformational Counseling

Presenter: Sharde' O'Rourke, LPC, LMFT, LSATP, CCTP, PAI, SAP, ADHD-CCSP

Marriott VII

Explore Unburdened: The Reclamation Theory, a culturally immersive clinical framework that redefines healing as an act of reclamation. This interactive session empowers counselors to disrupt performative empathy and surface-level interventions, offering grounded tools for deeper connection, transformative self-confrontation, and liberation-based therapy practices.

T412-Strengthening Connections: Meaningful Mentorship, Consultation, and Growth for New Professionals

Presenter: Esther Benoit PhD, LPC, ACS, NCC

Co-Presenter: Allison Dukes, Ph.D., NCC

Franklin/NY

This session explores how early career counselors can make meaning during the transition to independent practice. Emphasizing connection, consultation, mentorship, and continued education, participants will gain practical tools to prevent burnout, foster resilience, and develop a purposeful professional identity grounded in values, community, and ongoing growth.

T413- The State of School Counseling in Virginia - (Sponsored by VASC)

Presenter: Sarah Bazemore, M.Ed., Behavioral Health & Instructional Supports Coordinator

Chesapeake

Attendees will learn about updates, policies and resources coming out of the Virginia Department of Education. Let's take a walk-through some recent Virginia guidance docs and policies. We will also explore some exciting resources created to support the essential work school counselors do throughout the commonwealth!

Session 5
Friday, November 14, 2025, 7:30 AM – 8:30 AM

F500 - Morning Mindfulness Practice Group

Presenter: Alan Forrest, EdD, LPC, LMFT

Frank/Shang/York

Mindfulness is present moment awareness and the art of conscious living. It is the intentional attending to what is happening right now without judgment or reactivity. This morning practice group will provide an opportunity for participants to have a place to begin their day in stillness and silence; it can serve as a calming touchstone to return to throughout the day. The structure of the practice session will consist of a welcome, lightly guided period, and silent sit. We are all each other's teachers; therefore, we will conclude with an optional open discussion. Beginners and seasoned meditation practitioners are welcome. This is a gentle way to begin your day.

Session 6
Friday, November 14, 2025, 8:45 AM – 9:45 AM

F600 – Building an Ethical and Sustainable Private Practice: Launch to Growth

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Denielle Rigollosso LPC, CSAC, CAADC

Hampton I

This training will guide therapists on how to navigate the ethical considerations when starting their own private practice. Topics covered include ethical guidelines, legal requirements, and best practices to ensure compliance and success in building and growing a sustainable thriving private practice.

F601 – Helping Students and Supervisees honor clients' Religious and Spiritual identities

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Anita A. Neuer Colburn, PhD, SIP, LPC (VA), LCMHCS (NC), ACS, BC-TMH, NCC

Hampton II

This session reviews strategies for supporting counselors in training to provide ethical counseling services to clients with a variety of religious and spiritual identities. MSJCC-based self-awareness, knowledge, and skills interventions can be utilized throughout the curriculum and in clinical supervision. Ethical integration of religion/spirituality is stressed.

F602 – Safeguarding-Informed Trauma Model (SIT-M): Addressing Mistreatment in Medical Training through a Counseling Lens (Part 1 of 2)

Presenter: Zahnwhea Harmon, LPC

Co-Presenter: Danielle Winters, PhD

Hampton III

In this session, counselors will examine how pervasive bullying in medical training inflicts trauma and undermines well-being. We introduce the Safeguarding-Informed Trauma Model (SIT-M) and outline practical trauma-informed strategies, including anonymous reporting, restorative practices, peer support, systemic policy change, evaluation metrics, and healing frameworks to foster safer clinical learning environments.

F603 – I'm not crazy, I'm just hormonal: Utilizing the Menstrual Cycle as Clinical Case Conceptualization (Part 1 of 2)

Presenter: Emalee Zingher, LPC

Hampton VI

This presentation will be centered on how clinicians can distinguish each phase of the menstrual cycle and each hormones' influences on mental health while being able to differentiate between PMS, PMDD, Premenstrual Exacerbation Syndrome, and other DSM-5-TR disorders. Each clinician will also be able to determine tools, resources, and care coordination opportunities for effective treatment.

F604 – The Weight We Carry: Understanding and Supporting Women of Color Through the Lived Experience of Stress (Part 1 of 2)

Presenter: Shauna Moore Reynolds, Ed.D., LPCCs, LPC, NCC, ACS

Hampton VII

This session explores the unique and layered experiences of stress in the lives of women of color, shaped by roles, relationships, and systemic pressures. Counselors will learn trauma-informed, culturally responsive strategies to support women in processing stress, fostering resilience, and making meaning through connection—transforming overwhelm into empowerment across the lifespan.

F605 – News Flash: It's Not Just a Hot Flash!

Presenter: Laurie Wright, MS

Co-Presenter: Haley Alvis, MS, RIC, CSAC Supervisee

Hampton VIII

Menopause impacts all clients directly or indirectly. Did you know menopause is impacted by adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), yet only 20% of counselors screen for this? What is menopause? How does menopause impact women, partners, and society? Join us to learn about women's health and counseling strategies for midlife women.

F606 – This World is not Made for Us: Comprehensive Treatment for Disabled Clients

Presenter: Brandy Fallon, M.Ed., RIC

Marriott II

Almost 30% of the US population identifies as disabled. However, most mental health clinicians are not informed of how disability can affect their clients. This leads to ableist practices, distrust, and disconnection. This session will help teach clinicians how to navigate therapeutic relationships when treating clients with disabilities.

F607 – Fostering & Teaching Emotional Literacy through Creative Art

Presenter: Anna Schnetzler, MEd

Co-Presenter: Raegan Middelthon, B.S, QMHP-T

Marriott III

The session will emphasize teaching emotional literacy as part of the school counselor role as well as a part of school wide literacy initiatives. The session will explore various ways in which school counselors can integrate emotional literacy into literacy efforts. The presenters will specifically discuss outcomes of an expressive art group that focused on student understanding of emotions and the development of their emotional vocabulary.

F608 – Understanding and Treating Girls and Women with ADHD

Presenter: Gabriel Villarreal, LPC

Marriott V

This session will examine best practice for girls and women with ADHD. Where research leaves us, your presenters will fill in the gaps, and boost understanding of ADHD throughout the lifespan. Empowered counselors will offer the effective care girls and women have sought after and been denied for too long.

F609 – Becoming a Secure Base: How Provider Attachment Style Matters in Building Client-therapist Relationships

Presenter: Charis R. Miller, M.A., LPC, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH

Marriott VI

Whether you are a counselor, supervisor, counselor in training or consultant, being in the world of therapy invites us to be in constant work on ourselves. We work to provide a meaningful and authentic platform for therapy. In this session, we will explore why this is important and what difference it makes.

F610 – Client Care Is Clinical Care: Elevating Mental Health Outcomes Through Customer Service Excellence

Presenter: Felicia A. Garrett, MA, LPC

Marriott VII

This session explores how integrating customer service principles into counseling can ethically enhance client satisfaction, trust, and outcomes. Attendees will gain practical strategies for improving client interactions while preserving clinical integrity, reframing service excellence as a vital therapeutic tool that strengthens rapport and supports lasting change.

F611 – Making Meaning Through Mindfulness-Based Existential Counseling

Presenter: Alan Forrest, Ed.D., LPC, LMFT

Frank/Shang/York

Mindfulness is a method of training the regulation of attention with nonjudgmental acceptance, which results in positive health and well-being. The existential approach supports each person's uniqueness and helps to provide meaning and purpose. This presentation will explore how these approaches can complement one another. Strategies of mindfulness as a tool to enhance self-awareness and acceptance, and the core tenets of existential therapy, will be highlighted.

F612 – Self-Care Across Disciplines (Sponsored by VACES & VACUR)

Presenter: Angelia Dickens, Ph.D., LPC, LMFT, NCC, ACS

Co-Presenters: Sharon Silverberg, PhD, LPC, LMFT, RPT-S, ACS, NCC, CSOTP; Brandy K. Richeson, Ph.D., LPC, LSC, NCC, ACS; Lattisha Naylor, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, RCTP

Chesapeake 1 & 2

This session will present research grounded advice to counselors, supervisors, faculty, and students on helpful ways to use self-care techniques to live enriched lives and avoid burnout from a panel of counselors and educators from diverse backgrounds. Topics will include domains of self-care, ethical considerations, self-compassion, techniques, and avoiding burnout.

Session 7

Friday, November 14, 2025, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

F700 – Balancing Rights, Risks, and Relationships: Ethical Counseling with Children and Adolescents

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Ben Newman, Ph.D., LPC, LSATP

Co-Presenters: Abigail Williams LPC, CSAC, ATR-BC; Lauren Tatro LPC, ATR
Hampton I

Working with youth means navigating a delicate balance between trust, autonomy, and legal duty. This session explores the ethical and legal complexities of informed consent and confidentiality with minors, offering practical guidance and tools to help clinicians manage family dynamics, risk, and rights with clarity and compassion.

F701 – Ethical Trauma Stewardship

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Brittany Krackow, LPC, NCC, CCTP

Hampton II

This session explores why managing the emotional impact of trauma work is an ethical imperative for clinicians. Using the lens of trauma stewardship, we will examine how unaddressed vicarious trauma can impair care and introduce strategies to uphold ethical standards through clinician well-being, self-awareness, and sustainable practice.

F702 – Safeguarding-Informed Trauma Model (SIT-M): Addressing Mistreatment in Medical Training through a Counseling Lens (Part 2 of 2)

Presenter: Zahnwhea Harmon, LPC

Co-Presenter: Danielle Winters, PhD

Hampton III

In this session, counselors will examine how pervasive bullying in medical training inflicts trauma and undermines well-being. We introduce the Safeguarding-Informed Trauma Model (SIT-M) and outline practical trauma-informed strategies, including anonymous reporting, restorative practices, peer support, systemic policy change, evaluation metrics, and healing frameworks to foster safer clinical learning environments.

F703 – I'm not crazy, I'm just hormonal: Utilizing the Menstrual Cycle as Clinical Case Conceptualization (Part 2 of 2)

Presenter: Emalee Zingher, LPC

Hampton VI

This presentation will be centered on how clinicians can distinguish each phase of the menstrual cycle and each hormone's influences on mental health while being able to differentiate between PMS, PMDD, Premenstrual Exacerbation Syndrome, and other DSM-5-TR disorders. Each clinician will also be able to determine tools, resources, and care coordination opportunities for effective treatment.

F704 – The Weight We Carry: Understanding and Supporting Women of Color Through the Lived Experience of Stress (Part 2 of 2)

Presenter: Shauna Moore Reynolds, Ed.D., LCPCs, LPC, NCC, ACS

Hampton VII

This session explores the unique and layered experiences of stress in the lives of women of color, shaped by roles, relationships, and systemic pressures. Counselors will learn trauma-informed, culturally responsive strategies to support women in processing stress, fostering resilience, and making meaning through connection, and transforming overwhelm into empowerment across the lifespan.

F705 – Plugged in and Stressed Out: Understanding the Modern Teen Brain

Presenter: Caroline Augustin, M.Ed., LPC

Co-Presenter: Mallory Talbert MS, LPC

Hampton VIII

This session explores how teenage brain development and modern technology shape behavior, decision-making, and emotional growth. By understanding brain chemistry and today's digital landscape, adults can better support teens, build empathy, and foster meaningful connections that encourage healthy development and resilience.

F706 – Making meaning in counseling through strengthening wellness for ourselves and our clients

Presenter: Donna Dockery, PhD

Marriott I

Let's discuss unrealistic and toxic "shoulds and oughts" of today's wellness messaging, share healthy wellness strategies we can apply with clients and colleagues, and strengthen and transform ourselves with prevention and wellness plans that work. We deserve it!

F707 – The Many Within: Healing Through Parts Work, the Wisdom of the Body, and the Power of Self

Presenter: Austin Francis, LPC, CCTP, C-DBT

Marriott II

This session focuses on introducing parts work, based on the Internal Family Systems (IFS) model, that looks at parts of us that hold different views, memories, emotions, and reactions. Understanding individuals this way can reduce stigmatizing and pathologizing across relationships at school, at home, in the counseling office, and in the community.

F708 – Affirming Advocacy: Equipping Counselors to Support LGBTQ+ Communities Through Inclusive Practice and Policy Engagement (Sponsored by VA-ALGBTIC)

Presenter: Vanessa Dominguez, PhD, LPC, LMFT

Co-Presenters: Anita Neuer Colburn, PhD, LPC; Emily Chew, PhD, LPC

Marriott III

This presentation will discuss the need for Virginia counselors to advocate effectively for LGBTQIA+ communities through affirming clinical practice, policy engagement, and inclusive supervision. Presenters will highlight advocacy competencies, strategies for community collaboration, and review ethical considerations relevant to professional counseling with LGBTQIA+ individuals across settings.

F709 – Psychological flexibility: A core skill for lasting change across populations

Presenter: Jennifer Gobble, PhD, LPC, NCC, ACS

Co-Presenter: Trevor Gobble, MA, LPC

Marriott V

This session will focus on the benefits of psychological flexibility, as applied through Acceptance and Commitment Theory. When applied ethically in the counseling room, individuals can experience greater flexibility with change, the ability to achieve present moment awareness and be able to apply acceptance to their current situation. Research demonstrates the effectiveness of this skill and shows a decrease in depression and anxiety across populations through its use.

F710 – Career search self-efficacy: A collaboration between counseling and business

Presenter: Kristen Tuxbury, Ph.D.

Co-Presenter: Kaitlin Hinchey, Ph.D., LPC, LMFT, NCC; Katybeth Lee, Ph.D.

Marriott VI

In a collaboration between counselor education and the school of business, this session will explore outcomes of an experiential career readiness class grounded in social cognitive theory. Participants will leave with strategies for incorporating social cognitive theory into career interventions with clients and students and potential positive outcomes.

F711 – Connected or Conflicted? Understanding Attachment Styles in Couples (Sponsored by VACFC)

Presenter: Jacqueline Butler, Ph.D., LCSW, LSATP, CCTP-II

Marriott VII

This presentation explores how adult attachment styles influence the therapeutic relationship and clinical outcomes. Counselors will examine ethical considerations related to transference, countertransference, boundaries, and self-

awareness when working with clients impacted by insecure attachment. Attendees will gain tools for fostering emotional safety and applying attachment-informed, ethical interventions.

F712 – It's Not Just Picky Eating: Recognizing and Treating ARFID

Presenter: Taylor Rae Homesley, LPC, CPCS, CEDS-C

Co-Presenter: Jonathan Levy, MD, FAPA, CEDS-C

Frank/Shang/York

Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder or ARFID is not just picky eating or a phase to outgrow in childhood or young adulthood, rather it is an increasingly common eating disorder that counselors often have never heard of but need to be aware of in their practice. This session will focus on what it is, how to recognize and refer to specialized care, and how to support individuals along the way.

F713 – Unconditional Acceptance: Leveraging Animal-Assisted Therapy to Deepen Client Engagement

Presenter: Elizabeth Armstrong, Ph.D., RIC

Chesapeake 1&2

The phenomenon of increased unconditional positive regard which occurs when using animals with regular therapy. Because unconditional positive regard has been shown to increase motivation for change in clients, it is an essential element of therapy. By deepening the relationship with this kind of positive motivation, therapy can be more effective for some clients.

Session 8

Friday, November 14, 2025, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

F800 – Multicultural Competence in Action: What to Ask, When to Ask, and Why It Matters

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Katie Askren, PhD, LPC, LSATP, NCC, ACS

Co-Presenter: Louis Eliacin, LPC

Hampton I

This session teaches counselors how to build multicultural competence by asking intentional, culturally responsive questions. Participants will learn to use broaching as an ethical counseling stance and apply solution-focused techniques to foster deeper identity conversations. Attendees will leave with practical tools to increase client trust, insight, and cultural connection.

F801 – Supervision as a Parallel Process; Understanding and Harnessing Relationship Dynamics in Supervision for Supervisee Success

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in CLINICAL SUPERVISION

Presenter: Charis R. Miller, M.A., LPC, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH

Hampton II

Supervisors play a vital role in their supervisee's success in the counseling relationships. This presentation is a brief look at how the supervisory relationship mirrors the dynamic between a client and therapist. Participants will examine content versus process within the context of supervision.

F802 – Strengthening Your Intimate Connection: Helping Clients Define and Embrace Healthy Sexuality

Presenter: Alise Lindsey LPC, LMHC, CMHC, LCMHC, CCTP

Hampton III

Healthy sexuality and intimate relationships do not just occur, they are cultivated. Participants will explore how societal, familial and religious influences shape clients' understanding and experiences with intimacy and sexuality. Counselors will learn practical tools to promote self-awareness, communication, and authentic, expression of intimacy in individual and couples sessions.

F803 – Understanding and Treatment of Anger and Irritability in Adolescents

Presenter: Elena Savina, PhD

Hampton VI

Anger and irritability are common among adolescents. This presentation will discuss how interactions between biological and situational factors trigger adolescents' anger. It will outline anger-focused interventions including teaching adolescents anger recognition, problem solving, decision making, response inhibition, and affective empathy skills as well as the parental component of treatment.

F804 – Disability, Ableism, and Advocacy: Navigating Current and Changing Educational Settings

Presenter: Rachel Holcombe, M.Ed.

Hampton VII

This session discusses how ableism can show up in counseling practice, and how counselors can best navigate the continually changing policies of the US Department of Education to support students with disabilities. This session will look at policies impacting services for both K-12 and post-secondary students.

F805 – Multicultural Competencies for Counseling Hispanic/Latino Clients: Best Practices for Your Practice

Presenter: Elias Moitinho, PhD, LPC (VA), LMFT (TX)

Co-Presenter: Denise Moitinho, PhD, EdD

Hampton VIII

According to the Census 2020, the Hispanic/Latino population in Virginia has reached over 908,000 people, which is an estimated 10.5% of the state population (<https://www.census.gov>). Consequently, Virginia counselors are more likely to encounter Hispanic/Latino clients. To adhere to the ACA Code of Ethics, counselors must become multiculturally competent to work with diverse populations. This workshop will be based on current research on counseling Hispanic/Latino clients. First, it will discuss core values and norms of the Hispanic/Latino culture and implications for mental health counseling services. Second, it will describe multicultural counseling principles to help increase cultural competencies. Finally, it will present research-based best practices for counseling individuals and families of Hispanic/Latino background.

F806 – The Private Practice Pivot: How to Launch, Grow, or Join a Private Practice

Presenter: Rosa Jones, LPC

Marriott II

This workshop empowers residents and licensed clinicians to make informed pivots into private practice, whether launching their own or joining an established group. Learn the business, legal, and mindset essentials to confidently transition from employee to entrepreneur or team contributor and discover your best-fit path in today's evolving clinical landscape.

F807 – Launching VA-SAIGE: Building an Inclusive Community for LGBTQIA+ Counselors and Clients in Virginia (Sponsored by VA-ALGBTIC)

Presenter: Vanessa Dominguez, PhD, LPC, LMFT

Co-Presenters: Anita Neuer Colburn, PhD, LPC; Emily Chew, PhD, LPC

Marriott III

This session will introduce VA-SAIGE, a new VCA division dedicated to affirming and advancing the needs of LGBTQIA+ counselors and clients in Virginia. Participants will learn about the division's mission, founding process, advocacy goals, and opportunities for involvement as members, allies, and leaders.

F808 – Associational Advocacy: Promoting Member Interest and Social Change (Sponsored by VACES & RACA)

Presenter: Brandy K. Richeson, Ph.D., LPC, LSC, NCC, ACS

Co-Presenters: Carlton J. Henderson, Ph.D., LPC; Danielle dj Johnson, LPC; Crystal Jones, LMFT

Marriott V

Advocacy is key to the counseling profession. It involves counselors advocating for clients and the profession. Associational advocacy involves professional organizations, actively advocating for policies and regulations that benefit their members and the industry. Associational advocacy includes activities like mentoring, lobbying, grassroots activism and collaboration to influence decision-makers and make systemic changes.

F809 – Counselors Connect Hope and Resilience to the Autoimmune: Multiple Sclerosis

Presenter: Justin Jordan, PhD., LPC, LSATP

Co-Presenter: Michelle McDevitt, MD

Marriott VI

Multiple Sclerosis is a chronic neuroinflammatory condition with variable progression and physical symptoms, which lead to mental health challenges beginning in a prodromal phase and continue to evolve over the duration of the lifespan. Professional counselors can address specific challenges to the individual and the family system to instill hope, maintain autonomy, and enhance resilience with MS clients.

F810 – From Service to Support: A Systemic Lens on Veterans and Addiction Recovery

Presenter: Bilal Kalkan, Ph.D.

Co-Presenters: Mnahil Khan; Jenna Kehoe

Marriott VII

Traditional addiction counseling approaches may overlook the issues within the family system. This session will explore how family dynamics influence substance use and recovery outcomes for military veterans. This session will provide a comprehensive framework for addiction counseling that incorporates relational and systemic factors unique to veterans and their families.

F811 – The Inherited Brain: A transdiagnostic approach to understanding and treating ADHD and Intergenerational Trauma across the lifespan

Presenter: Ellen Winsor Chaffin, LPC, CGC, EMDR-T

Co-Presenter: Bryan J. Prinzivalli, LPC-S, LMFT-S, ACS, A-D/HD-CCSP, EMDR-T

Frank/Shang/York

Though they often present with similar symptomology, ADHD and Intergenerational Trauma have different etiological and treatment considerations that are critical to effective clinical care. This presentation discusses a transdiagnostic and multifactorial assessment and treatment approach for the conceptualization and clinical management of intergenerational trauma and ADHD in diverse populations.

F812 – AI Hacks for Private Practice: Work Smart, Not Harder! (VCAF Grant Recipient, Pete Warren Fellow)

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Samantha Redd, M.A.

Chesapeake

This session is designed for counselors who are curious about integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into their practice, unsure where to begin, or currently using AI and seeking to expand its applications. Participants will explore ethical, HIPAA-compliant strategies for using AI in clinical documentation, client communication, and administrative tasks. Practical guidance will be provided on how to ethically and effectively use general-purpose AI platforms (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini) as well as mental health-specific AI tools. Attendees will gain insight into AI platforms that can enhance private practice operations and improve overall efficiency to work smarter, not harder.

Session 9
Friday, November 14, 2025, 2:45 PM – 3:45 PM

F900 – Toward an Ethical Future: AI and the Practice of Counseling (Part 1 of 2) VCA Ethics Committee

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Aimee Brickner, Ph.D., LPC

Co-Presenters: Rob Froelich, Ed.D., LPC; Kathleen McCleskey, Ph.D., NCC; Silvia Restivo, Ed.D., LPC; Jennifer Blake, MA, RN; Rachel Boykin, LPC; Raquel Luster, LPC, LCPC, NCC, CCTP

Hampton I

This session continues the VCA Ethics Committee's 2024 convention presentation and centers around the use of artificial/augmented intelligence (AI) in clinical counseling practice. Considerations for the practitioner's role in documentation, informed consent and confidentiality, different AI platforms, and ethical concerns in various facets of counseling practice will be discussed.

F901 – Counseling Without Walls: The Intersection of School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health

Presenter: Amanda G. Francis M.Ed/Ed.S, LPC

Hampton II

Explore the evolving role of school counselors and their vital intersection with clinical mental health. This session highlights the shift from guidance counselor to mental health advocate/first responder, covers typical daily responsibilities, and offers strategies for integrated care through collaboration with school-based outpatient services.

F902 – Overcoming the Imposter Phenomenon: Building a Competence Mindset for Mental Health Professionals (Part 1 of 2)

Presenter: Kevin B. Handley, Ph.D.

Hampton III

Think you're fooling everyone? That nagging voice saying "I don't belong here" affects 70% of successful counselors! This dynamic workshop reveals why imposter thoughts plague helping professionals and teaches powerful psychological flexibility techniques to silence your inner critic and step confidently into your professional identity.

F903 – I Got Boots on the Ground: A Panel Discussion on Sustaining a Black Therapists Collective Care Community in Response to Systemic Isolation and Burnout

Presenter: JaNae Taylor, PhD, LPC

Co-Presenters: Danielle L. McDowell, LPC; Felicia A. Garrett, M.A., LPC, NCC; Jennifer E. Black, LCSW, RYT

Hampton VIII

Join a panel of Black therapists as they share firsthand how their participation in a culturally grounded, wellness-centered community has supported their emotional sustainability and professional longevity. This discussion highlights collective care practices as a necessary response to burnout and systemic isolation.

F904 – Virginia's Crisis Response-The Development of a Local Crisis Continuum and How to Help Your Clients Access These Supports

Presenter: Christopher Barnes, LPC

Marriott I

A panel discussion detailing progress that has been made around the state towards expansion of community crisis continuums. We will be discussing how to recognize clients in crisis and how to use these developing services to support clients in crisis.

F905 – Unsticking the System: Navigating the Six Stuck Spots in Adoption, Foster, and Kinship Care

Presenter: Diane M Neighbarger, LCSW

Co-Presenter: Corinne Lam, LPC

Marriott II

This session offers tools to help professionals support adoptive, foster, and kinship families facing relational and systemic challenges. Using the "Six Stuck Spots" framework, participants will explore trauma, identity, and grief while learning strategies to overcome barriers and strengthen family systems through a trauma-informed, developmentally grounded approach.

F906 – Counselor-Driven Change: Leadership Tools Inspired by Integrated Healthcare Settings

Presenter: Cory Gerwe, PhD, LPC, ACS

Co-Presenters: Agatha Parks-Savage, EdD, LPC, ACS; LaConda Fanning, PsyD, LPC, ACS; Daniel St. John, PhD, LPC

Marriott III

Grounded in counselor-driven change within integrated graduate medical education, this session offers leadership guidance that counselors can adapt in various settings. Participants will gain practical strategies to motivate diverse teams, build support for wellness initiatives, and build psychologically safe cultures across private practice, schools, community agencies, and other settings.

F907 – Listening for and Supporting Client Adjustment to Secondary Losses in Death and Non-Death-Related Contexts

Presenter: Jennifer Gerlach, Ph.D., NCC, Resident in Counseling

Co-Presenter: Skylar Walker, B.A. in Criminal Justice, master's student in Counselor Education with concentration in clinical mental health counseling at Longwood University

Marriott V

Clients often experience secondary losses as a reaction to death and non-death-related loss. These secondary losses (e.g., self-esteem, identity, faith, finances, and more) may be painful and elicit grief reactions. Come learn strategies for identifying and helping clients adjust to secondary losses across a variety of experiences.

F908 – Considerations and Impacts of Non-Consensual Intimate Material Distribution (Sponsored by VA-CSJ)

Presenter: Adrienne Randle, LPC, NCC

Marriott VI

A session to define and consider what Non-Consensual Intimate Material Distribution can look like as well as its impacts on survivors/victims. In addition, to discuss resources and treatment considerations.

F909 – Shaping Scholars: A Mixed-Methods Exploration of Research Competency and Identity in Counselor Education

Presenter: Bilal Kalkan, Ph.D.

Co-Presenter: Greta Christ

Marriott VII

Research engagement is not only an ethical imperative but also a pedagogical necessity in counselor education programs. This session will explore doctoral counselor education students' perceptions of their research competency and identity development. This session will provide insights that support the enhancement of research training within counselor education programs.

F910 – “Am I even good at this?”, Self-evaluation of clinician effectiveness and client satisfaction

Presenter: Mike Takacs, Ph.D., LPC-S

Frank/Shang/York

Counselors seek validation for their effectiveness of their abilities with clients with little to no evidence to support their internalizations. Supervisors are often challenged with understanding their supervisees progress, growth and ability to be effective with client outcomes.

F911 – Building Villages: Group Counseling Strategies for Academic Persistence (Sponsored by VASGW)

Presenter: Joy Mwendwa, PhD, LPC

Chesapeake 1&2

Graduate students experience isolation, burnout, and being overwhelmed during the academic process. This presentation will discuss how group support models in higher education can enhance academic persistence and well-being. Using a case study, presenters will highlight how a dissertation support group model fosters accountability, emotional support, and academic momentum.

Session 10

Friday, November 14, 2025, 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

F1000 – Navigating Ethical Decisions in Counseling During Challenging Times (Part 2 of 2) VCA Ethics Committee

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Aimee Brickner, Ph.D., LPC

Co-Presenters: Rob Froelich, Ed.D., LPC; Kathleen McCleskey, Ph.D., NCC; Silvia Restivo, Ed.D., LPC; Jennifer Blake, MA, RN; Rachel Boykin, LPC; Raquel Luster, LPC, LCPC, NCC, CCTP

Hampton I

Providing ethical counseling requires staying informed about advancements in the field and changes in the broader world. Part 2 will explore ethical considerations in a changing political climate that affects clients, counselors, policy decisions, and challenges in providing optimal care. Case examples will be processed together to identify ethical practices.

F1001 – The ethical application of ‘The Person of the Counselor’

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Jennifer Gobble, PhD, LPC, NCC, ACS

Co-Presenter: Trevor Gobble, MA, LPC

Hampton II

This session will focus on the importance and diversity of counselors and how this affects the overall treatment of clients and the therapeutic relationship. Every counselor brings a set of skills, knowledge and abilities acquired through training and residency along with their individual personality and dispositions, which are what the counseling connection and rapport with clients are built on. When applied ethically, counselor dispositions, temperament and individual personality can have a significant impact on the therapeutic process and progress of the client.

F1002 – Overcoming the Imposter Phenomenon: Building a Competence Mindset for Mental Health Professionals (Part 2 of 2)

Presenter: Kevin B. Handley, Ph.D.

Hampton III

Think you're fooling everyone? That nagging voice saying "I don't belong here" affects 70% of successful counselors! This dynamic workshop reveals why imposter thoughts plague helping professionals and teaches powerful psychological flexibility techniques to silence your inner critic and step confidently into your professional identity.

F1003 – Reclaiming the Self After Trauma: Utilizing EMDR to Support Identity Redefinition in Trauma Survivors

Presenter: Melissa Londry, LPC

Hampton VII

This session explores how EMDR therapy can facilitate post-traumatic identity reconstruction. Attendees will learn how to help clients move beyond survival by reprocessing traumatic memories through the lens of psychoeducation, cognitive interweaves, and fostering a renewed, empowered sense of self rooted in resilience, agency, and authenticity.

F1004 – The Inevitable Overlap of Psychedelics and Counseling: What We Know, What We Don't, and How to Prepare

Presenter: Kim Hughes, M.A., Ed.S., Ph.D. Student, Resident in Counseling

Co-Presenters: Robin Anderson, Psy.D., LPC; Renee Staton, Ph.D., LPC

Hampton VIII

The uptick in interest, acceptability, and use of psychedelics and psychedelic-assisted therapies means encountering these compounds in counseling is inevitable. Recognizing the criticality of counselor preparedness, this session will extend research findings on the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs of counselor educators regarding psychedelics and the associated impact on counselor training.

F1005 – Coping That Clicks: Creative Mnemonics for Client Success

Presenter: Mikenley Lundy, Ph.D.

Marriott I

This session will demonstrate to counselors how to utilize creative and easy-to-remember mnemonics to teach clients practical coping skills. Learn how to boost client engagement and make essential tools for stress, anxiety, and trauma more accessible in everyday life.

F1006 – A Focused Ethnography: Mental Health Therapists in Pediatric Integrated Care

Presenter: Melanie Agustin, PhD, LPC, NCC

Marriott II

LPCs in integrated settings are educated and experientially trained in theory-based approaches to enhance patient care. Counselor development is underrepresented in pediatric mental health research regarding integrated approaches, improved outcomes and patient satisfaction. This focused ethnography provides a nuanced view of the pediatric counselors, and relational impacts of clinical encounters.

F1007 – Cultivating Change and Inner Transformation: Integrating Hope-Action Theory and Jungian Psychology

Presenter: Spencer Niles, PhD, NCC, CCC

Co-Presenter: Jenifer Niles, Ph.D., NCC

Marriott III

This presentation introduces a practical, integrative approach that combines Hope-Action Theory (Niles, Amundson, & Yoon, 2010) with key concepts from Jungian analytical psychology to foster both immediate progress and long-term, transformative change in clients.

F1008 – Underrepresented Voices: A Phenomenological Study of Black Male Counseling Students Professional Identity Development

Presenter: Carlton J. Henderson, Ph.D., LPC

Co-Presenter: Don P. Purnell, Graduate Student

Marriott V

Black males remain underrepresented in the counseling profession as students & educators. Due to their underrepresentation, their professional identity development remains unclear. This presentation examines Black male students' perceptions of their counselor professional identity, focusing on unique supports and obstacles.

F1009 – Balancing Counselor Identity with Interdisciplinary Expertise

Presenter: Mary Sanderfer-Stull, PhD, LPC, BSN, RN, EMT-B

Co-Presenters: Brittany Suggs, Ph.D., MPH, LPC; Iyad Arusi, MD, MBA

Marriott VII

While cultivating a clear counseling identity is essential, it may also be feasible and beneficial to integrate additional professional identities to support the delivery of holistic care. This session explores counselors who hold an additional professional identity and examines how integrating aspects of that identity may enhance clinical practice and contribute to more holistic client care.

F1010 – Successful VCA Foundation Suzee Leone Grant Applications (No CE hours)

Presenter: Celeste Hall, M.Ed.

Co-Presenters: Lorraine K. Hall, M.A.; Anne Henry M.Ed., ACSC; Renee Staton Ph.D., LPC

Frank/Shang/York

This session will highlight strategies for writing successful VCAF Suzee Leone Grant applications. Recent grant recipients will share ideas for utilizing grant funding to enhance the counseling profession.

F1011 – Neurodiversity and Autism Spectrum Disorder: Best Practice Assessment and Treatment

Presenter: Trina Young Greer, Psy.D., LCP, LPC, LMFT

Chesapeake

Gain a clinically grounded and culturally sensitive understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorder and neurodivergence. This session blends diagnostic best practices with insights on neurodiversity and evolving assessment strategies to empower counselors to recognize, affirm, and support neurodivergent clients across the lifespan.

Session 11

Saturday, November 15, 2025, 7:30 AM – 8:30 AM

S1100 - Morning Mindfulness Practice Group

Presenter: Alan Forrest, EdD, LPC, LMFT

Frank/Shang/York

Mindfulness is present moment awareness and the art of conscious living. It is the intentional attending to what is happening right now without judgment or reactivity. This morning practice group will provide an opportunity for participants to have a place to begin their day in stillness and silence; it can serve as a calming touchstone to return to throughout the day. The structure of the practice session will consist of a welcome, lightly guided period, and silent sit. We are all each other's teachers; therefore, we will conclude with an optional open discussion. Beginners and seasoned meditation practitioners are welcome. This is a gentle way to begin your day.

Session 12

Saturday, November 15, 2025, 8:45 AM – 9:45 AM

S1200 – Unlocking Emotional Insight: Trauma-Informed Strategies to Improve Counseling Skills and Deepen Counseling Sessions (Part 1 of 2)

Presenter: Katie Askren, LPC, LSATP, NCC, ACS

Co-Presenter: Karina Blest, MA, RIC

Hampton I

Many clients display distress-related avoidance patterns such as anxiety, anger, worry, or substance use. Meanwhile, counselors often struggle to reflect meaning and foster emotional insight. This interactive session offers practical, trauma-informed strategies to strengthen counseling skills and help clients connect with core emotions and underlying beliefs.

S1201 – Navigating the Storm: Wading Through Ethical Standards in Clinical Supervision

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS & CLINICAL SUPERVISION

Presenter: Shauna Moore Reynolds, Ed.D., LPCCs, LPC, NCC, ACS

Hampton II

To be effective Clinical Supervisors, it is essential to possess a strong understanding of the ethics involved in supervision. Ethics serve as the foundation of our roles as supervisors, clinicians, and educators. Participants will explore best practices for interactions between supervisors and supervisees, as well as between supervisees and clients. They will identify the ethical and professional guidelines that govern Clinical Supervision and discuss the responsibility of Clinical Supervisors to prioritize their own health and mental well-being in order to maintain their effectiveness in this role.

S1202 – Counselors Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI): Application of ACA Code of Ethics and Virginia Laws and Regulations

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Dara N. Brown, PhD, LPC, CSOTP

Co-Presenter: Sharon Silverberg, PhD, LPC, LMFT, RPT-S, ACS, CSOTP, NCC

Hampton III

This presentation will examine counselors use of AI in clinical practice, highlighting ethical and confidentiality concerns. Using case scenarios, attendees will learn how to navigate using AI in counseling, while applying ACA ethical codes as well as Virginia counseling laws and regulations to their decision-making process.

S1203 – Strength in Recovery

Presenter: Waganesh Zeleke, PhD, LCPC, NCC

Co-Presenters: Carolyn Hawley, Ph.D.; Shruti Sampath, M.A.; Amy Armstrong, Ph.D.

Hampton VI

This session explores the lived experiences of Peer Recovery Specialists (PRS) in gambling recovery services, highlighting the transformative power of strengths-based, trauma-informed peer support. Attendees will gain insights into effective group facilitation, organizational support, and practical strategies to sustain and scale peer-led recovery in behavioral health settings.

S1204 – Supporting Professional Counselors Who Experience Online Hate

Presenter: Jennifer "Jay" Zegan-Lister, MS, LPC, Doctoral Student

Co-Presenter: Darius Green, Ph.D., LPCC

Hampton VII

Online hate is a longstanding, but rapidly evolving, global concern that impacts mental health and wellness. Despite limited research and practical guidelines, professional counselors are also vulnerable to the impact of online hate. This session will cover contemporary research on online hate to develop strategies for supporting impacted counselors.

S1205 – Validating Pain and Empowering Joy: A Conversation on Trans and Gender Expansive Experiences

Presenter: Angela P. Callahan, MEd, LPC, NCC

Co-Presenter: Victoria Haynes, MEd, LPC, CST; Shawn P. McNulty, LPC

Hampton VIII

914 pieces of anti-trans legislation across 49 states have already been introduced in 2025 (as of June 2025; Trans Legislation Tracker, 2025). Transgender and gender expansive folks are under attack, and the emotional strain can be difficult to help clients navigate. Join us for a conversation on how to support those who are living through these difficult days.

S1206 – A Qualitative Content Analysis: Counselor Trainee Perspectives in Service Learning

Presenter: Brittany Sager-Heinrichs, PhD, LPC, CCTP, CAADC

Co-Presenters: Connor Cote, BA, QMHP-T; Katherine Rambo, B.S.

Marriott I

A qualitative content analysis examining how service learning in harm reduction settings influenced mental health counseling students' biases, attitudes, and counseling competencies toward individuals with substance use disorders.

S1207 – Diagnostic Considerations in Perinatal Anxiety

Presenter: Tara Cothren, M Ed., LPC, doctoral student

Co-Presenter: Trisha Goodall, M.E., graduate student

Marriott II

Perinatal anxiety is inadequately captured in DSM-5-TR and is often missed by providers. Impacting 1 in 5 birthing persons, perinatal mental health concerns are poorly understood by general mental health professionals. We have an imperative to educate ourselves about these struggles, contribute to improved screening, and support our clients.

S1208 – Bent, not Broken: Supporting Adolescents with Scoliosis

Presenter: Kathleen McCleskey, PhD, NCC

Co-Presenter: Madeline Cason, graduate student, Michele Dowdy Emerging Leader

Marriott III

Scoliosis is a relatively common spinal abnormality that requires challenging treatments including bracing or surgery. Adolescents with scoliosis experience many psychological impacts such as anxiety and depression. Counselors are vital in supporting adolescents throughout this experience. This presentation will cover information about scoliosis and strategies to strengthen coping and resilience.

S1209 – A Guided Workshop on Developing a Personalized Self-Care Plan

Presenter: Catalina Kraft, M.A., NCC, Resident in Counseling

Marriott V

Maintaining and promoting emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual well-being is an ethical responsibility for counseling professionals (ACA, 2014, Section C). This workshop will focus on self-care as a tool to reduce burnout. Participants will learn about burnout symptoms and self-care strategies; practice self-care activities; and create a personalized self-care plan.

S1210 – Exploring the Role of Dance in Black Women As Well-Being through Qualitative Inquiry and Embodied Practice

Presenter: Crista Glover, PhD, LPC, ACS

Co-Presenter: Alicea R. Jenkins, PhD, LPC-S

Marriott VI

This workshop presents the findings from a qualitative study on the role of dance in Black women's well-being. The workshop will overview the literature, the key themes of the study, lead an experiential component with movement, and conclude with reflection time and suggestions for including culturally informed, holistic wellness into clinical practice.

S1211 – Disarming the Alarm: How Counselors Can Apply Social Psychology to Help Clients Overcome Loneliness and Foster Meaningful Connection

Presenter: Natalie Kerr, Ph.D.

Co-Presenter: Elizabeth Shoop, LPC, LMHC, CCTP

Marriott VII

This presentation addresses the growing crisis of loneliness. It explores how social psychology can inform counseling practices, introducing evidence-based strategies to reduce social threat and foster connection. Attendees will gain practical tools to help clients overcome loneliness, build meaningful relationships, and improve their overall well-being.

S1212- Revisiting the “Counselor-First” Model - (Sponsored by VASC)

Presenter: Christina Quinn, ME.

Co-Presenters: Tyler Cabatic, MEd; Anaid Shaver, PhD, MS; Carrie Saunders, Ph.D.; Anna Schnetzler, MEd
Frank/Shang/York

This panel brings together school counseling professionals to explore what it means to be a "counselor first" in the school setting. Panelists will share perspectives on balancing the core role of supporting student well-being and mental health with the many responsibilities that often pull counselors in different directions. Through real-world examples and discussion, participants will gain insight into maintaining professional identity, prioritizing counseling services, and advocating for practices that keep student support at the center of school counseling.

Session 13

Saturday, November 15, 2025, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

S1300 – *Unlocking Emotional Insight: Trauma-Informed Strategies to Improve Counseling Skills and Deepen Counseling Sessions (Part 2 of 2)*

Presenter: Katie Askren, LPC, LSATP, NCC, ACS

Co-Presenter: Karina Blest, MA, RIC

Hampton I

Many clients display distress-related avoidance patterns such as anxiety, anger, worry, or substance use. Meanwhile, counselors often struggle to reflect meaning and foster emotional insight. This interactive session offers practical, trauma-informed strategies to strengthen counseling skills and help clients connect with core emotions and underlying beliefs.

S1301 – *The Maintenance Model of Supervision: Supporting Licensed Counselors as Burnout Prevention*

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in CLINICAL SUPERVISION

Presenter: Elizabeth Kurt, MS, LPC (WI), NCC

Hampton II

The Maintenance Model of Supervision is a wellness-based supervision theory for preventing burnout in licensed counselors. Effective supervision and wellness practices have shown promise in reducing counselor burnout. This application integrates systemic, the WELMs, and the discrimination models for a holistic approach to supervision.

S1302 – *Foul on the Play: Navigating Ethical Issues Counseling Collegiate Student Athletes*

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Danielle Rodgers, Ph.D.

Co-Presenter: Sonja Lund, Ph.D., LPC

Hampton III

Counseling collegiate athletes presents unique ethical challenges that are not directly addressed by the ACA Code of Ethics. This presentation will explore ethical dilemmas of counseling college athletes, strategize ways to increase ethical decision making among interprofessional athletic teams, and collaboratively apply ethical decision making to a case study.

S1303 – *Counseling Filipino/a/x Americans: Contemporary Issues in Equitable Practice (Pete Warren Fellow)*

Presenter: Christine Marie Q. Turner, M.Ed., NCC

Hampton VI

Filipino/a/x Americans are the second largest Asian American subgroup in the United States, and it is important for counselors to understand their communities. This presentation explores how counselors across school and clinical mental health settings can provide optimal counseling services for Filipino/a/x American students and clients.

S1304 – *Unlocking Independence: The Counselor’s Roadmap to Private Practice*

Presenter: Valerie Stolicker MS, LPC

Hampton VII

This session provides practical and conceptual guidance for launching and sustaining a private counseling practice. Topics include legal structures, ethical documentation, marketing, burnout prevention, and inclusive service models. Attendees will gain tools, templates, and insight to build a principled, client-centered, and sustainable clinical practice.

S1305 – *Making a Difference: Turning Advocacy into Action in Virginia’s Legislative Process (VCA Advocacy Committee)*

Presenter: Adrienne Randle, LPC, NCC

Co-Presenters: Ashley Spanfelner, LPC, LSATP; Rebecca Kaderli, LPC, LSATP, C-DBT, NCC, ACS; Becky Bowers-Lanier, MSN, MPH, EdD

Hampton VIII

This is where passion meets policy. Advocacy isn't just policy talk—it's power, influence, and the key to shaping the future of counselors. Join the dynamic VCA Advocacy Committee for a behind-the-scenes look at how to move beyond social advocacy into effective legislative advocacy by looking at how everyday conversations can translate into real legislative wins. Our presenters bring energy, insider knowledge, and practical strategies to help you step into the world of advocacy with confidence. You'll walk away knowing how to connect with legislators, with a clearer understanding of how to amplify your voice and get involved in shaping policy and make advocacy not only impactful, but exciting.

S1306 – *Hood Therapy: Mental Health, Masculinity, and the Unspoken Rules of the Streets (School)*

Presenter: KD Diamond, M.Ed., LPC-S, LSATP

Marriott I

This session explores the intersection of masculinity, mental health, and street culture in counseling Black and Brown youth, specifically those who are male or present with masculine energy, regardless of gender identity. Participants will gain insight into unspoken survival codes and learn effective treatment planning, rapport building, and behavioral change strategies rooted in cultural context.

S1307 – *Making Meaning in Counseling: Strengthening Connections, Transforming Lives*

Presenter: Karen D. Pender, LPC

Co-Presenters: Sonya Allen, LPC; LaConda Fanning, Psy.D, RN, LPC, LSATP

Marriott II

Step into a transformative conversation about the heart of counseling, making meaning. In “Making Meaning in Counseling: Strengthening Connections, Transforming Lives,” we will explore how meaning-making not only heals but also empowers both client and clinician. Guided by the reflective question, “Where Does My Help Come From?”, this session weaves together existential, narrative, and spiritually integrative approaches to create stronger, more connected therapeutic relationships.

S1308 – *As Thick As Thieves: Exploring the Comorbidity of Trauma and Addiction*

Presenter: Richard Carroll, PhD, LPC, ACS, CSAC-S

Co-Presenter: Phil Parris, MA, Resident in Counseling

Marriott III

This presentation will explore the some of the etiological and teleological reasons for the co-occurrence of trauma and addiction. We will explore the neurobiological and psychological impact, as well as trauma-informed care and possible barriers to treatment. Finally, resiliency and protective factors will be examined.

S1309 – Building Collaborative Relationships: Finding Balance for Effective Counseling

Presenter: Rashida Powell-Hutson, PhD., LMHP-R, CAADC, MAC, CSAC

Marriott V

This session explores the critical connection between counselor wellness and effective therapeutic relationships. Participants will learn strategies to balance empathy and self-care, identify personal boundaries, and cultivate resilience. Interactive activities will encourage self-reflection, enabling counselors to enhance their effectiveness and maintain well-being while fostering collaborative client relationships.

S1310 – Innovating with Wellness: Integrating wellness into your counseling practice

Presenter: Elias Moitinho, PhD, LPC (VA), LMFT (TX)

Marriott VI

A counselor's theoretical orientation guides assessment, case conceptualization, and treatment planning but in many cases, it tends to focus on a particular facet or dimension of the human experience rather than the whole person. When this happens, the theoretical orientation may limit the counselor's approach to mental health counseling and, consequently, the services are not provided from a holistic perspective. Although the biopsychosocial-spiritual model has become widely recognized and accepted in the counseling profession, still many counselors tend to use approaches that are symptom-focused and compartmentalize the various dimensions of life. On the other hand, wellness models have a holistic framework and go beyond the biopsychosocial-spiritual model as they incorporate other areas of life such as occupational, financial, environmental, and contextual to provide a more comprehensive understanding of factors that influence mental health and well-being. Thus, this workshop will identify holistic models of wellness and mental health, explore wellness assessment tools counselors can use, and describe wellness-focused mental health interventions and collaborative practices to facilitate lifestyle changes to improve clients' mental health and well-being.

S1311 – Breathing Buddies - How classroom partnership can create school-wide impact (School)

Presenter: Sarah Tracy, MA School Counseling, NBCT, CYT200 & CYT300

Marriott VII

Action-based research project on how Breathing Buddies Classrooms effects absenteeism and discipline referrals. Project will be piloted in a summer school setting and run into place the 2025 - 2026 school year. See the results midway through project with opportunity to see results at completion of project

S1312 – Have Faith: Effective and Sensitive Application of Religion and Spirituality

Presenter: Andrew Edwards, LPC

Frank/Shang/York

Review and reflection on professional and personal considerations for addressing religion and spirituality in the therapy relationship.

Session 14**Saturday, November 15, 2025, 12:45 PM – 1:45 PM****S1400 – The Sleep-Deprived Therapist: Why Your Sleep Matters More Than You Think (Part 1 of 2)**

Presenter: Kevin B. Handley, Ph.D.

Hampton I

You can't pour from an empty cup, or a sleep-deprived brain. This provocative workshop tackles the therapist's sleep crisis head-on, then arms you with evidence-based interventions for clients. Fix your own sleep first, then become the sleep-savvy clinician your clients desperately need.

S1401 – Impacts of Attachment Theory on the Supervisory Relationship: From the Supervisor's Perspective

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in CLINICAL SUPERVISION

Presenter: Sirena Pangelinan, M.S., NCC, Resident in Counseling

Hampton II

In this presentation I plan to talk about the supervisory lens from CES and attachment lens. Themes of attachment dynamics, attachment within the supervisory relationship, ethics in supervision, and the impacts of attachment from a supervisor's perspective will each be described and questioned.

S1402 – Collaborative Documentation: An Ethical & Time-Saving Approach to Notetaking

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Suzan K. Thompson, Ph.D., LPC

Co-Presenter: Susanne Preston-Josey, PhD, LPC

Hampton III

This interactive session introduces participants to the concept of collaborative documentation, a best practice that involves clients in the notetaking process during clinical encounters. Participants will explore the ethical foundations of this approach, including transparency, client autonomy, and shared decision-making. Through real-world examples and practical tips, attendees will learn how collaborative documentation can streamline workflow, reduce administrative burden, and foster stronger therapeutic alliances. The session will also address common barriers and provide actionable solutions for integrating collaborative documentation into daily practice.

S1403 – The Algorithmic Gatekeeper? Navigating Benefits, Complexities, and Ethical Imperatives of AI in Counselor Education Gatekeeping

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Brittany G. Suggs, Ph.D., MPH, LPC

Co-Presenter: Mary Sanderfer-Stull, Ph.D., LPC, RN, BSN, EMT-B

Hampton VI

This session examines the expanding role of artificial intelligence (AI) in counselor training program gatekeeping. This session will explore the benefits of utilizing AI for skill assessment while addressing the ethical challenges of its implementation. The aim is to equip counselor educators and supervisors with strategies for responsibly integrating AI technologies and evaluating trainees, creating a balance between innovation and ethics in training future counselors.

S1404 – Voices that Heal: Latina Immigrant Mothers Creating Change Through Connection

Presenter: Maribel Tohara Nakamatsu, M.S.

Co-Presenters: Rachael Goodman, LPC; Alejandra Salazar Salame; Brenda Yamilet Gonzalez Plaza; Jennifer Aguilar

Hampton VII

Using two Community-Based Participatory Action Research exemplars, we highlight immigrant mothers' strengths and community building practices. We explore factors contributing to authentic connection as mothers co-create spaces for healing and empowerment. We center voices of Latina mothers, emphasizing how mutual support fosters resilience in the context of sociopolitical challenges.

S1405 – Healing from Spiritual and Narcissistic Abuse: A Polyvagal-Informed Approach to Boundaries and Safe Relationships for Finding True Connection

Presenter: Shannon Soto, Resident in Counseling

Hampton VIII

This session explores the intersection of spiritual and narcissistic abuse, boundaries, and polyvagal theory. Participants will learn to recognize the clinical signs of complex trauma from religious harm and develop polyvagal-informed interventions that foster safety, connection, and autonomy in survivors' recovery processes.

S1406 – The Power of Narrative: Using Expressive Writing to Foster Emotional Healing and Client Connection

Presenter: Adina Silvestri, EdD, LPC

Marriott I

Explore how expressive writing and narrative therapy can deepen client insight and foster emotional healing. Dr. Adina Silvestri shares creative, evidence-informed tools to help clients externalize problems, re-author limiting beliefs, and build resilience. Attendees will gain practical strategies to strengthen the therapeutic alliance and empower clients through transformative storytelling.

S1407 – Medical Trauma: A Threat that Never Leaves

Presenter: Brandy Fallon, M.Ed, RIC

Marriott II

Up to 80% of people who have experienced a life-threatening injury or illness have reported traumatic stress reactions. Sometimes, the threat of severe injury or illness remains, and treating this particular type of trauma can be difficult. However, trauma modalities such as ACT and Somatic approaches may help.

S1408 – Taming the Villain: Using Metaphors to Help Clients Understand Intrusive Thoughts

Presenter: Ashleigh Spencer, MA, Resident in Counseling

Marriott III

Individuals with OCD and anxiety struggle with intrusive thoughts which often conflict with and threaten the sense of self. Inviting people to engage with their internal struggles and personify them through the lens of a fictional villain can promote externalization of these mental health challenges. Externalization can support emotional distancing, shame reduction, and help build insight into patterns.

S1409 – Implementing Dialogical Process in Couples Therapy

Presenter: Butch Losey, Ed.D., LPCC-S

Marriott V

Dialogical Process Couples Therapy is an interactive, conversation-based approach where couples engage in dialogue facilitated by the clinician, focusing on fostering deep mutual understanding to address key relational concerns. This presentation will outline the core principles, structure, and techniques useful to help couples cultivate transformative dialogue within sessions.

S1410 – Collaborative Counseling Featuring ChatGPT: Talk Therapy Meets Tech Therapy

Presenter: Ashley Peterson, LPC, ADHD-CCSP

Marriott VI

This session explores how clinicians can ethically integrate ChatGPT into counseling practice through the Millennial Eclectic Therapy lens. Attendees will examine real-world uses, client reliance on AI as a substitute for therapy, and strategies to maintain therapeutic integrity while embracing technological tools.

S1411 – Behind the Curtain: Process as Content in the Therapy Room

Presenter: Vic Tedrow, LMHP-R, MA

Marriott VII

This session explores the unique opportunity within the therapeutic relationship to help clients take risks in bringing real-time awareness to their inner world, making the implicit explicit. Attendees will learn how immediacy and the process of therapist-client interactions serve as powerful tools for connection and change.

S1412 – Exercise as a Treatment for all Mental Health Diagnoses (Part 1 of 2)

Presenter: Gabriel Villarreal, LPC

Frank/Shang/York

Expanding on last year's presentation: "Exercise is Medicine for the ADHD Brain," this session will look at all diagnoses, how and when to start the conversation with clients or caregivers, what forms of exercise might be best for which diagnoses, how to facilitate compliance, and achieve the best clinical outcomes.

Session 15

Saturday, November 15, 2025, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

S1500 – The Sleep-Deprived Therapist: Why Your Sleep Matters More Than You Think (Part 2 of 2)

Presenter: Kevin B. Handley, Ph.D.

Hampton I

You can't pour from an empty cup, or a sleep-deprived brain. This provocative workshop tackles the therapist's sleep crisis head-on, then arms you with evidence-based interventions for clients. Fix your own sleep first, then become the sleep-savvy clinician your clients desperately need.

S1501 – What makes supervisees more responsive to the supervision? (Sponsored by VACES)

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in CLINICAL SUPERVISION

Presenter: Zubeyde Akpakir, PhD, Resident in Counseling

Hampton II

This session presents findings from a mixed-methods study exploring factors influencing supervisee responsiveness to supervision by doctoral student supervisors. Using Q methodology, the study involves CITs' subjective perspectives of supervisees. Implications for enhancing supervisor training and improving supervision practices in counselor education programs will be discussed.

S1502 – Crisis of Faith: Addressing Ethical Concerns for Mental Health Professionals

This presentation counts towards 1 CE Hour in ETHICS

Presenter: Nicole Taylor, EdS, LPC

Co-Presenter: Stacey Lilley, Ph.D., LPSC, LPC-S (VA)

Hampton III

This session aims to increase conversation regarding the ethical and value dilemma present for religious professionals working with cases of religious harm. Issues related to ethics, burnout, and competency will be addressed, as well as supervision and treatment approaches.

S1503 – Where the Secular Meets the Sacred: Navigating Religious and Political Values in Clinical Practice

Presenter: Tamika Jackson, Ph.D., M.Div., NCC

Co-Presenter: Yeni Dottin-Carter, Graduate Student

Hampton VI

This session explores the intersection and influence of religion and politics when working with clients who hold conservative religious and political values. Counselors will gain culturally sensitive tools to work effectively with these clients, address potential value conflicts, foster therapeutic rapport, and ensure ethical, inclusive care in diverse clinical contexts.

S1504 "We Created a Small Family": Co-Creating a Support Group for Immigrant Parents using Relational-Cultural Theory

Presenter: Rachael Goodman, Ph.D., LPC

Co-Presenters: Maribel Tohara Nakamatsu, M.S.; Alejandra Salazar Salame; Brenda Yamilet Gonzalez Plaza
Hampton VII

This session presents lessons from a parenting support group grounded in Relational-Cultural Theory and trauma-informed care. Findings show how mutual empathy, connection, and cultural affirmation supported healing and community building among Central American immigrant parents. Participants experienced key RCT outcomes, offering insights for counseling with immigrant families navigating complex stressors.

S1505 – Exercise as a Treatment for all Mental Health Diagnoses (Part 2 of 2)

Presenter: Gabriel Villarreal, LPC

Frank/Shang/York

Expanding on last year's presentation: "Exercise is Medicine for the ADHD Brain," this session will look at all diagnoses, how and when to start the conversation with clients or caregivers, what forms of exercise might be best for which diagnoses, how to facilitate compliance, and achieve the best clinical outcomes.

S1506 – Less is More: Protecting and Promoting Self-Care with the Power to Say "No"

Presenter: Sara L. Wood, PhD, LPC, LCMHC, NCC

Co-Presenters: Sarah H. Jarvie, EdD, LPC, NCC; Sean Dougherty, MS, MEd, LAPC

Marriott I

Saying "no" often evokes a negative connotation yet holds significant value in fostering well-being and preventing burnout caused by overcommitment. Thus, counselors can benefit from learning when and how to decline additional demands. This session will explore strategies for harnessing the power of saying "no" to prioritize and promote counselor self-care.

S1507 – Breaking the Cycle: Addressing Stigma and Strengthening Counselor Response to BPD

Presenter: Amy Weber, LPC

Marriott II

This presentation examines the stigma surrounding borderline personality disorder (BPD) and its impact on counselor development and supervision. Attendees will explore how gaps in training and supervision affect clinical attitudes, and gain trauma-informed, practical strategies to support ethical, effective care for clients diagnosed with BPD.

S1508 – Transforming Lives Through Inclusion: Working Competently with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Clients

Presenter: Alicea R. Jenkins, Ph.D., LPC-S

Co-Presenter: Thomas McGirr, Graduate Student

Marriott III

This session explores Deaf culture and its relevance to professional counseling, highlighting cultural values, common barriers to access, and ethical considerations. Attendees will gain practical strategies for improving communication, accessibility, and cultural responsiveness when working with Deaf and hard-of-hearing clients.

S1509 – Building Military Cultural Competency in Counselors

Presenter: Richard Wyatt, MA, LPC, CSOTP

Marriott V

Military cultural competence is vital for building a therapeutic relationship with veterans, servicemembers, and their families. It allows counselors to build rapport and consider the unique skills and concerns of military-affiliated clients to more effectively serve them. This session will focus on building military cultural competency and best practices for working with military populations.

S1510 – Scroll, Swipe, Play, Cope: Helping Teens Navigate TikTok, ChatGPT, Gaming, and the Digital World (Sponsored by VCCA)

Presenter: Chris Conley, LPC

Co-Presenter: Lianna Pevar, Resident in Counseling

Marriott VII

Explore how social media, gaming, and AI tools like ChatGPT impact teen mental health. This session highlights risks and opportunities while offering practical, strengths-based strategies to help therapists ethically engage teens navigating digital life.

VCA's Annual Legislative Day

Monday, January 19, 2026

ADVOCACY begins with YOU!

As many counselors as possible are urged to participate in VCA's Annual Legislative Day on Monday, January 19, 2026, in Richmond, VA. As a professional counselor, you can't afford to miss this opportunity to make your voice heard. Please plan to attend Legislative Day and tell your delegate and senator how concerned you are about the state of mental health services and the strains on public education. To register, go to www.vcacounselors.org. Registration is free!

If you have advocacy-related questions in the meantime, please contact the VCA Lobbyist, Debra Rodman at debra@debrarodman.com, or the Advocacy Committee Chair, Adrienne Randle at advocacy@vacounselors.org.

Silver Sponsor

CONTACT

757-289-1125

connect@vbcounselingservices.com

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- Court-Ordered: Parenting, Anger Management, Batter's Intervention classes + More
- Educational Advocacy

ABOUT US

Virginia Beach Counseling Services and Family Enrichment Center provide compassionate mental health support to children, adolescents, and adults throughout Hampton Roads. Our team provides therapy, testing, and court ordered services that are tailored to a wide range of emotional, behavioral, and psychological challenges.

Services are available in English and Spanish, with flexible scheduling, including evenings and weekends (virtual and/or in-person), fostering inclusivity and comfort.

2025 VCA MARKETPLACE

Thursday & Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM; First & Third Floor Foyers & Hallways

AMFM Healthcare

757-971-8115; nicole.lasseigne@amfmhealthcare.com
<https://amfmreatment.com/virginia/>

AMFM Mental Health Treatment provides secluded and secure residential care facilities for mental health throughout Virginia. We particularly emphasize recovering in-tandem with holistic treatments, such as physical fitness, yoga, music therapy, and other alternative treatments paired with more traditional, evidence-based techniques.

The Barry Robinson Center

757-347-0213; IDeSimone@barryrobinson.org
www.barryrobinson.org

The Barry Robinson Center provides a holistic environment that sets military-connected youth and their families on the path to healing. Our staff includes qualified and compassionate therapists, teachers, counselors, doctors, nurses, and dietitians. Our beautiful, open, college-like campus provides a safe and serene setting for programs designed to help military-connected youth and their families overcome emotional and behavioral difficulties. For more information, please contact Lauren DeSimone at LDeSimone@barryrobinson.org or 757-347-0123.

Children's Hospital King's Daughters *Silver Sponsor*

757-668-7171; amanda.kregiel@chkd.org
www.chkd.org/our-care/mental-health-care/
CHKD's mental health program includes experts in the fields of child psychiatry and psychology, nurse practitioners and psychiatric nurses, clinical social workers, professional counselors, medical social workers, and mental health coaches and technicians.

Commonwealth Savers

855-472-8382; agallegos@commonwealthsavers.com
www.commonwealthsavers.com

Helping people dream, save, and achieve. With an evolving mission beyond education savings, Virginia529 is now Commonwealth Savers, offering a variety of saving programs to ensure Virginians — and beyond — achieve their financial goals. Invest529 (education savings) - Helping millions of families achieve their educational goals through tax-advantaged 529 savings programs. ABLEnow (disability savings) - Save for

today's needs or invest for tomorrow in a tax-advantaged ABLE account that won't impact the means-tested benefits critical to many with disabilities.

dakari Moon

678-883-3511; dakarimoon@gmail.com
<https://dakarimoon.com>

dakari Moon is dedicated to making products that help reduce anxiety and stress while encouraging creativity and freedom in self-expression. We sell art, books, coloring books, journals and stationery.

The Emily Program..... *Silver Sponsor*

888-272-0742; outreach@emilyprogram.com
www.emilyprogram.com

The Emily Program is a national leader in eating disorder treatment, offering compassionate, personalized care for all ages and genders. Our comprehensive services range from outpatient therapy to 24/7 inpatient care, with proven recovery outcomes. Since 1993, we've helped individuals find peace with food, body image, and themselves. With 20 locations across six states—Washington, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Georgia—and virtual treatment options, we make specialized care accessible nationwide. To learn more or get support, visit emilyprogram.com or call 1-888-EMILY-77.

Freedom Support Services

540-744-6162; rjones@myfreedomss.com
www.myfreedomss.com

Freedom Support Services is a mental health private practice that helps healing and helping professionals and students live their best lives. We specialize in providing education, training and mental health services to counselors, educators, health care professionals and college students across Virginia. We will offer the following products and services at the convention:

- Give counselors access to counseling services (insurance-based or self pay)
- Provide resources for counselors who need referral sources.
- Educational resources and tools for graduate students, residents and counselors
- Merchandise to include t-shirts, mugs, and bracelets.

Genesis Counseling Center, Inc

803-468-2090; sbomar@genesiscounselingcenter.com
<https://genesiscounselingcenter.com/>
Genesis Counseling Center is a Comprehensive Christian Psychological Counseling Center serving out-patient clients throughout Virginia and beyond. We provide in person and online counseling, family counseling, psychological testing, medication management and more. Voted "Best Psychiatric Practice" by COVA magazine 2021-2025. Learn more about the Genesis Difference at: <https://genesiscounselingcenter.com/>. We are here to help provide hope and healing and committed to "touching lives and inspiring life" in our communities.

Halo Healing Center, Inc.

804-773-3888; kdiamond@hhcva.org
www.hhcva.org

Halo Healing Center is a nonprofit organization offering transformative court-approved and voluntary programs for individuals navigating anger, domestic abuse, theft-related behaviors, and more. Rooted in compassion and accountability, our services combine evidence-based practices with culturally responsive care to support lasting change. From youth anger management to our signature B.R.E.A.K. F.R.E.E. intervention program, we create space for healing, responsibility, and growth. Visit our booth to learn how we partner with counselors, courts, and communities to illuminate new paths forward. Step Into the Light with Halo Healing Center.

Intercept Health

540-759-8517; zlebra@intercepthealth.com
intercepthealth.com; lifebridgecounseling.com
Since 1996, Intercept Health has grown from a group home provider to a full-service provider of specialized programming across the care continuum. We offer a variety of specialized services to meet the needs of individuals and families throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. The LifeBridge Continuum of Care offers a comprehensive range of highly effective services designed to assist individuals and their families facing functional impairments at home, in school, or within the community. With services catering to children, adolescents, adults, and families, the LifeBridge Continuum of Care offers both individual and wrap-around options, ensuring flexibility and continuity of care

Kempsville Center for Behavioral Health

757-461-4565; rosanne.foggin@uhsinc.com
www.kempsvillecbh.com

Kempsville Center for Behavioral Health is a pediatric mental health hospital that provides treatment to children and teens. Treatment includes acute stabilization for youth ages 4 - 18, long term residential treatment for youth ages 11 - 17, and a full-day, outpatient program for youth ages 8 - 18. Kempsville is a Tricare certified program and works with children from all over Virginia.

The Lemich Clinic

757-536-1233; info@lemichclinic.org
https://www.lemichclinic.org/

The Lemich Clinic for Military Mental Health is the preeminent outpatient provider for service members in Virginia. We work exclusively with uniformed service members, their spouses, and veterans. This specialization provides us with a unique cultural lens and understanding. If you need assistance with this population, The Lemich Clinic may be able to help. We bridge the gap between clinician and the DoD and VA with services such as psychological testing with military normative groups, active duty status letters, and veteran disability rating documentation. Stop by our booth to see how we can help you with your military clients.

Life Center of Galax

Silver Sponsor

434-579-4041; laura.tysinger@galaxrecovery.com
www.galaxrecovery.com

The Life Center is an inpatient drug rehab facility for adult males and females. We have two locations, Galax (co-ed) and Hillsdale (male only). We offer Detox, Residential, and Partial Levels of Care. We accept Medicaid and Commercial/Private Insurance. We offer our own transportation, accept pregnant women in their first and second trimesters, and accept sex offenders.

Living Healthy from the Inside Out

804-335-5327; Health@teresameadows.com
Healthy Living Table Display: Healthy Immune System, Healthy Brain & Cognition, Stress & Mood

Demo's: Healthy Circulation Free Sample Test
Healthy Skin and Aging Demonstration

New Healthy Living Programs - Jumpstart and Weight Loss Program -Pause with Purpose Menopause Program - Healthy Home-Detox your home one room at a time - Gut Matters Program-Digestion and Detox Program

Mental Health Virginia

804-297-4017; jsappington@mentalhealthvirginia.org
mentalhealthvirginia.org

We have free services - a non-crisis Warm Line and a program for survivors of trauma. And ducks with the Warm Line number on them.

Millennial Eclectic Therapy

571-400-1276; info@ashleypetersoncounseling.com

<https://www.millennialeclectictherapy.com>

Millennial Eclectic Therapy® (MET®) is a modern therapeutic framework integrating evidence-based practices with culturally responsive approaches to address the needs of today's clients. MET® blends psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, and systemic theories while considering generational identity, technology, and social norms. In addition to its clinical application, MET® offers self-paced continuing education courses, interactive workshops, practical worksheets, and a structured 90-day ADHD program. These resources provide clinicians with adaptable tools that are both relevant and accessible, supporting work with ADHD, relationships, and social media influences. MET® equips counselors to engage clients with creativity, authenticity, and strategies that foster curiosity, resilience, and growth.

Mount Regis Center

434-426-8323; Christy.Meeks@mtregis.com
www.mtregis.com

Mount Regis Center is a licensed 48-bed residential treatment facility located in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains in Salem, Va. There they provide Detox, Residential, Partial Hospitalization with housing and in-person or virtual Intensive Out Patient to adults 18 years of age and older, dealing with a primary Substance Use Disorder. The clients have individual support in several ways, such as specialized recovery tracks, in-house support groups, and 24/7 support from our on-site staff of addiction professionals. For those who need transportation, we are able to transport up to 6 hours away. Mount Regis proudly works with most insurances, along with VACCN and TriCare.

The National Association of Black Counselors, Inc.

804-938-5273; nabcounselors@outlook.com
www.nabcounselors.org

NABC is a nationally recognized professional association (and supportive community) that enhances and encourages professional growth and endeavors in the field of counseling and mental health; NABC also

welcomes all that have concern and interest in the overall health and mental health affecting those of African ancestry in the United States and abroad.

Nykalu

Nykaluarts@gmail.com; Nykalu.bigcartel.com

I'm an aspiring developmental psychologist selling earrings, keychains, jewelry, keychains, and other such accessories which generally are affordably priced.

The Pavilion

757-339-7231; amber.white@pavilionwp.com
<https://pavilionwp.com/>

The Pavilion at Williamsburg Place provides compassionate care to adults who need acute psychiatric stabilization. The Pavilion Outpatient Center of Hampton provides adults with PHP, IOP, & VIOP treatment.

Premier Supervision and Consultation, PLLC

434-515-1571; info@premiersupervision.com
www.premiersupervision.com

Premier Supervision and Consultation, PLLC is devoted to the practice of clinical supervision. We set the benchmark for quality, integrity, and compassionate care. Our supervisors individually tailor services to foster professional development of clinicians and supervisors at all levels, thereby enhancing individual well-being and community health. We provide individually tailored clinical supervision for counselors-in-training, support for supervisors who want to grow in their provision of supervision, consultation and supervision support for private practices, and guidance for universities and mental health agencies.

Pyramid Healthcare

844-444-0027; hwilson@pyramidhc.com
www.pyramidhealthcare.com/va

Founded in 1999 and headquartered in Altoona, Pennsylvania, Pyramid Healthcare, Inc. provides a full continuum of high-quality, evidence-based mental health and substance use treatment programs and services including level of care assessments, withdrawal management, residential, outpatient, Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), halfway houses, aftercare and alumni support for adults and adolescents at 45+ locations across Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. Visit www.pyramid-healthcare.com/va or speak to an Admissions Specialist at 1-844-444-0027 to refer or learn more about our withdrawal management, residential treatment and outpatient programs for adults based in Newport News and Radford, Virginia.

Safe Harbor Recovery Center

602-565-6572; selwa.yatim-badra@safeharborbhc.com
<https://safeharborrecovery.com/>
We are a substance use residential treatment facility located in Portsmouth VA, as well as an outpatient program in Chesapeake VA.

Sandstone Care

757-776-5031; Jackie.wallace@sandstonecare.com
www.sandstonecare.com
PHP/IOP MH/ SUD treatment in Virginia Beach providing treatment for Young Adult & Adolescent Ages 13-30.

Supportive Intervention Services

804-330-0310; mscandided@gmail.com
<https://supportiveservicesllc.com>
Supportive Intervention Services, LLC, promotes positive mental health and actively supports individuals with mental illnesses, to enhance the quality of life. Based in Richmond Virginia, services include AMHSB, IIH, Crisis, ARTS, PHP, MHIOB and Outpatient. Owner and clinical director Le'Keisha S. Hite PsyD, LPC, MAC, SAP, CSAC, NCC, has become an Author: You're Stuck and You Don't Know It: How to Escape the Gray Area in Your Relationships offers strategies for breaking unhealthy patterns and creating healthier connections. Designed for counselors and clients alike, this resource provides tools to support growth, self-awareness, and stronger relationships in personal and professional settings.

Tandem Behavioral Health

540-348-4700; swain.lakeisha@gmail.com
<https://tandembehavioralva.com/>
We provide outpatient Substance Use (2.5) PHP & (2.1) IOP for adults. We also provide Substance Use Case Management and Peer Recovery Support Services.

Upheal

434-409-3835; kira@upheal.io
<https://www.upheal.io/>
Upheal is an AI-powered platform that transforms therapy sessions into high-quality, structured clinical documentation. Designed for mental health professionals, Upheal automatically generates progress notes, treatment plans, and insights, helping reduce administrative burden and improve clinical outcomes. With features like HIPAA-compliant security, real-time analytics, and customizable templates, Upheal empowers clinicians to focus more on their clients and less on paperwork—streamlining workflows while enhancing the quality and consistency of care across mental health practices.

VCA Foundation

Gold Sponsor

vcafboard@vcafoundation.org; www.vcafoundation.org
VCAF has 20+ years of supporting counselors in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Our Board of Directors includes a hardworking, energetic and seasoned veterans of the counseling profession. They are committed to enhancing the counseling profession. However, the practicing professional counselor makes the difference every day, to help build and support the counseling profession of the future. That is why the VCA Foundation affirms that, "Counselors are the Foundation, Everyday!"

Virginia Beach Counseling Services *Silver Sponsor*

757-289-1125; connect@vbcounselingservices.com
vbcounselingservices.com

Virginia Beach Counseling Services and the Family Enrichment Center offer compassionate mental health care to children, adolescents, and adults across Hampton Roads. Their experienced clinicians provide therapy, testing, and court-ordered services tailored to emotional, behavioral, and psychological needs. With flexible scheduling, including evenings and weekends, both virtual and in-person, they ensure accessible support for busy lives. Services are available in English and Spanish, promoting inclusivity. Located in Virginia Beach, the center fosters a welcoming space where healing and growth are prioritized. Whether facing anxiety, trauma, or life transitions, they help individuals and families thrive through personalized, professional counseling.

William & Mary School of Education

Silver Sponsor

757-221-2317; graded@wm.edu
<https://education.wm.edu/admissions/>

Since 1693, William & Mary has prepared educators to lead and inspire. Grounded in a legacy of innovative teaching, learning and community engagement, we empower students to make an impact in schools, clinics and beyond. Join the Tribe—take your next step with the School of Education. Earn your bachelor's, master's, educational specialist, doctoral degree or certificate with us. Choose from programs in:

- Educational Policy, Planning & Leadership
- School Psychology & Counselor Education
- Teacher Education (Curriculum & Instruction)

SAVE THE DATE - VCA 2026 CONVENTION
MARRIOTT NORFOLK WATERSIDE
\$153 + TAX NIGHTLY RATE
NOVEMBER 12-14, 2026



Giving Back to the Community Project

Sponsored by Virginia Counselors for Social Justice



This year, the Virginia Counselors Association is honored to spotlight **Teens With a Purpose (TWP) – The Youth Movement** as our *Giving Back to the Community* project, sponsored by Virginia Counselors for Social Justice.

Teens With a Purpose is more than a youth program—it is a movement of hope, healing, and empowerment. Founded in 1996 by Deirdre Love and established as a 501(c)(3) in 2008, TWP has been a steadfast force in Hampton Roads, creating spaces where all young people are **seen, heard, valued, and celebrated**.

At TWP, creativity is at the heart of transformation. Through spoken word, music production, creative writing, visual arts, and even horticulture, young people discover their voices, build confidence, and connect with their communities in meaningful ways. These experiences become pathways to academic success, emotional well-being, and future opportunities—helping youth not only imagine a brighter tomorrow but step boldly into it.

With special care for those who have faced poverty, community violence, trauma, or involvement with the justice system, TWP meets young people where they are and surrounds them with support, inspiration, and love.

To extend our support, VA-CSJ invites you to join us in giving back by donating items that will directly benefit the youth and families served by TWP:

- Canned food items
- Unwrapped toys
- Gently used clothing
- Hats, gloves, scarves
- Gently used coats

Together, we can make a lasting impact—one act of kindness, one donation, one life touched at a time. Learn more about this remarkable organization at www.twp-themovement.org.

Persons with Disabilities VCA makes every effort to ensure that all activities are accessible to persons with disabilities. All hotels are ADA compliant.

About VCA

VCA is the Virginia Counselors Association. VCA was founded in Richmond in 1930 as the Virginia Personnel and Guidance Association (VPGA). VCA is dedicated to the goal of meeting the needs of Virginia counselors in a variety of work settings. It is a dynamic and active organization that has been effective in responding to state-wide issues and in providing opportunities for professional interaction at the state and local levels.

PAST PRESIDENTS OF VCA

1930-31	Bessie M. Mottley	1970-71	Paul B. Walter	1998-99	Donald Anderson
1931-32	H. I. Willett	1971-72	Ellen Chewning	1999-00	Paul Galvin
1932-33	Bessie M. Mottley	1972-73	Rex Tillotson	2000-01	Arlene Ingram
1933-34	W. C. Ikenberry	1973-74	Shirley Downes	2001-02	Laurie Rokutani
1934-35	W. C. Ikenberry	1974-75	Jack Duncan	2002-03	Michele Dowdy
1935-36	Bessie M. Mottley	1975-77	M. Catherine Cockrill	2003-04	Loretta Kreps
1938-40	Martha Reely	1977-78	Janet W. Dingman	2004-05	A. Renee Staton
1940-41	Martha Reely	1978-79	Fred Adair	2005-06	Adele Walker-Blue
1941-42	Mitchell Dreese	1979-80	Johnnie Miles	2006-07	Terry A. Mullinnix
1942-43	J. E. Bauserman	1980-81	Bonnie Wasmund	2007-08	Lisa M. McDowell
1943-45	Wilbur S. Pence	1981-82	Ted Remley	2008-09	Denise J. Jones
1946-48	John F. Showalter	1982-83	Claire Cole	2009-10	Gerard Lawson
1948-50	Fred B. Dixon	1983-84	Bob Pate	2010-11	Marcia Obenshain
1950-52	C. L. Schollenberger	1984-85	Carol G. Barr	2011-12	Pamelia Brott
1952-54	Alfred J. Mapp	1985-86	Janice Clark	2012-13	Summer Tetterton
1954-56	Rebie H. Lassiter	1986-87	Nancy Helms	2013-14	Edward Magalhaes
1956-58	Kathryn G. Cook	1987-88	Lou Talbutt	2014-15	Linda Leitch-Alford
1959-60	Donald J. Herrmann	1988-89	Carl Swanson	2015-16	Hillary Press
1960-61	Dallas H. Smith	1989-90	Pete Warren	2016-17	Helen Runyan
1961-62	George O. McClary	1990-91	Libby Hoffman	2017-18	Linda Grubba
1962-63	Paul E. Behrens	1991-92	Eleanor Saslaw	2018-19	Monica Band
1963-64	Virginia B. Goggin	1992-93	Susan D. Leone	2019-20	Rebecca Kaderli
1964-65	Marguerite Key	1993-94	Leslie Kaplan	2020-21	Cyrus Williams
1965-66	Walter O. Jewell	1994-95	Judith Ladd	2021-22	Wendy Eckenrod
1966-67	Ethel R. Chrisman	1995-96	Dorothy Blum	2022-23	LaConda Fanning
1968-69	Richard L. Beard	1996-97	Patricia Lynn	2023-24	Mike Takacs
1969-70	Helen Jones	1997-98	Claudia Sowa	2024-25	Lakesha Roney

VCA HISTORICAL AWARD WINNERS

John R. Cook Award

1991	John Cook
1992	Ted Remley
1993	Fred Adair
1994	Robert Pate
1995	Ellen Chewning
1996	Pete Warren
1997	Don Ayers
1998	Carl McDaniels
1999	Libby Hoffman
2000	Dorothy Blum
2001	Dale Brittle
2002	Carl Swanson
2003	Jack Duncan
2004	Ruth Perlstein
2005	Patricia Lynn
2006	Andrew Beale
2007	Martha Woods
2008	Paul Galvin
2009	Etta Jane Hall
2010	Judith Ladd
2011	Eleanor Saslaw
2012	Gerard Lawson
2013	Michele Dowdy/Sandy Hite
2014	Bryan Carr
2015	Marcia Obenshain
2016	Suzee Leone
2017	Emanuel Bartolotta
2018	Linda Grubba
2019	A. Adele Walker-Blue
2020	Richard Gressard
2021	LaConda Fanning
2022	Regina Meredith
2023	Ellissia Price-Fagin
2024	Lennis Echtering

Humanitarian & Caring Person

1984	Claire Cole	1984	Betty Sult	2008	Hampton Roads (large)
1986	Ellen Chewning	1986	Eva Davis Brinkley	2009	Lynchburg (small)
1989	Fred Adair	1990	Carl Cooper	2010	Hampton Roads (large)
1990	Gary Kelly	1991	Kathy Nolan	2011	Western Tidewater (small)
1991	Nancy Helms	1992	Marge Bleiweis	2012	Central Valley (large)
1992	Kevin Geoffrye	1993	John Pettyjohn	2013	Peninsula (small)
1993	Robert Pate	1994	Barbara Mills	2014	Roanoke (large)
1994	D.L. "Pete" Warren	1995	Randall Clingenpeel	2015	Central Valley (large)
1995	Dorothy Blum	1996	Eleanor Saslaw	2016	Roanoke (small)
1996	Don Ayers	1997	M. Kay Orr	2017	Roanoke (large)
1997	Andy Beale	1998	Ellen Chewning	2018	Roanoke (small)
1998	Rick Gressard	1999	Anita Tieman	2019	Central Valley (large)
1999	Claudia Sowa	2000	Don Ayers	2020	Roanoke (small)
2000	Susan Leone	2001	JoAnn McCabe	2021	Central Valley (large)
2001	Betty Hornick	2002	Lonna Horeth	2022	Roanoke (small)
2002	Tim Grimes	2004	Lennis Echtering	2023	Central Valley (large)
2003	Gary Waynick	2005	Mary Durgala	2024	Prince William Region (small)
2004	Thomas Hohenshil	2006	Hillary Wing-Richards		
2005	Claire Cole Curcio	2007	Alan Forrest		
2006	Hildy G. Getz	2008	Anne Stewart		
2007	Carol Kaffenberger	2009	Marilyn Draughon		
2008	Carl Swanson	2010	Patricia Lynn		
2009	Linda Grubba	2011	Felecia Allen		
2010	Rosemary Thompson	2012	Karre Lloyd Jones		
2011	Sandra Hite	2013	Adrienne McDonald		
2012	Michele Dowdy	2014	Elizabeth Vohar		
2013	A. Renee Staton	2015	Laura Farmer		
2014	Ellissia Price	2016	LaConda Fanning		
2015	P. David Glanzer	2017	Decca Knight		
2016	Lennis Echtering	2018	Todd Stanley		
2017	Nancy Bodenhor	2019	Vacant		
2018	Rebecca Dedmond	2020	Christy Cundiff		
2019	Vacant	2021	Vacant		
2020	Renee Bruno	2022	Chereen Gamal		
2021	Kevin Doyle	2023	SC Nealy		
2022	Robert Froehlich				
2023	Brandy Smith				
2024	LaConda Fanning				

Counselor of the Year

1984	Michele Diana
1986	Carolyn Wallace Jacobs

Division of the Year

2018	VASGW
2019	VCDA
2020	Vacant
2021	Vacant
2022	VASGW
2023	VASC
2024	VACES

VCA CONVENTION EVALUATIONS

Thank you so much for attending the 2025 VCA Annual Convention at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott, in Norfolk, VA. We are proud to bring together some amazing presentations, a keynote speaker, exhibits and special events. Your feedback is critical in our ongoing effort to improve this annual event. Please tell us about your experience at the VCA Convention by completing **both** the Overall Evaluation, and the Individual Sessions Evaluations Online at <https://www.vcacounselors.org/page/VCAConventionEvaluation>



Individual Session Evaluation - Session Evaluations are important to VCA since they are **required for NBCC Certification** of programs offered by VCA at the Convention.

Overall Survey - Provide feedback regarding your overall experience.



Acknowledgments

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land we are on is the ancestral and present-day lands and waters of the Lumbee and Chesapeake peoples, who have nurtured and maintained profound relationships with this place since time immemorial. Our commitment to acknowledging this territory among our colleagues—and to approaching this place with gratitude and mindfulness—honors not only the land itself, but the enduring presence and resilience of the Indigenous peoples who call it home. May our actions continue to grow from reflection into meaningful care, stewardship, and respect for all who are connected to these waters and this land. We give honor and recognition to this tribe and their enduring legacy. In addition, we acknowledge the 21,000 women, men, and children that left Virginia via Norfolk and sold to enslavers down the Mississippi River Valley. We honor their labor and immense suffering. Their resilience and spirit laid the foundation for much of the history and culture of Norfolk, Virginia. To the Lumbee, Chesapeake, and African people of this land we give honor.

2025 VCA Convention Planning Committee

VCA would like to take a moment to thank all the hard work and dedication of the 2025 VCA Convention Planning Committee. The committee worked diligently, committing their time and resources to ensuring this would be a successful convention. We all hope that you enjoy the convention. If you see a committee member, please say thank you.

Sarah Tracy, Convention Committee Chair

Dr. Cory Gerwe, VCA President

Vicky Wheeler, VCA Executive Director

Jessica Johnson, ADA Chair

Sonnet Conner, Awards Chair

Hannah Ingo, Social Media

Dr. Aimee Brickner, Programs Chair

Kendall Keyser, Silent Auction Chair

Melinda Staton, Special Events Chair

Carlton Henderson, Technology Chair

Linda Grubba & Joan Monahan, Volunteer Co-Chairs

Charnetta Waters, VCA Chapter Council Chair

Dr. Brittany Suggs, VCA Division Council Chair

Shekila Melchior & Charnetta Waters, Welcoming Committee Co-Chairs

The Welcoming Space

Sponsored by VA-CSJ & the VCA Racial and Diversity Committee



VA-CSJ
TO BE OF SERVICE

Take a break. Breathe. Be yourself.

The Welcoming Space is designed as a safe, affirming environment for individuals who identify with marginalized communities and groups.

Here you can:



Relax with yoga mats, pillows, and calming water sounds



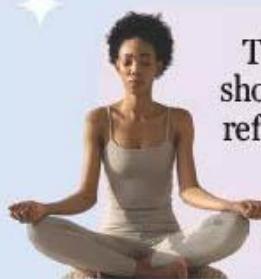
Reset with oil diffusers, crystals, and bubbles



Reconnect through coloring and creative expression

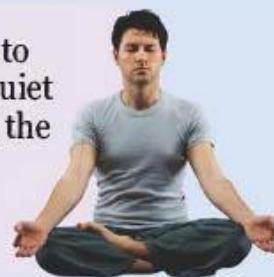


Belong in a community with like-minded individuals

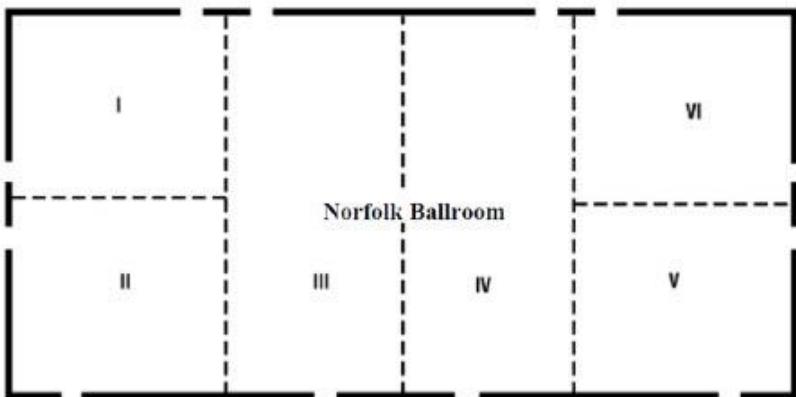


This is a judgement-free space where you are welcome to show up as your full, authentic self. Whether you need quiet reflection, mindful activities, or meaningful connection, the welcoming space is here for you

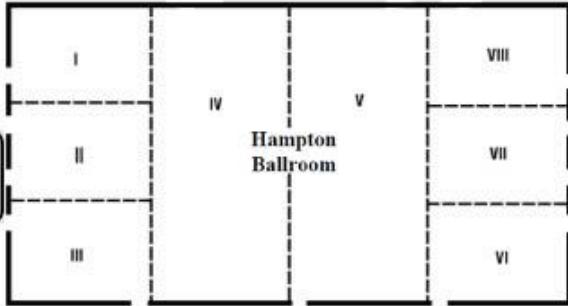
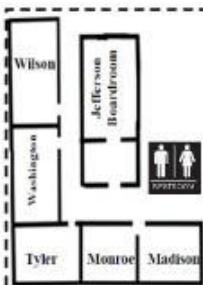
COME AS YOU ARE. LEAVE RENEWED



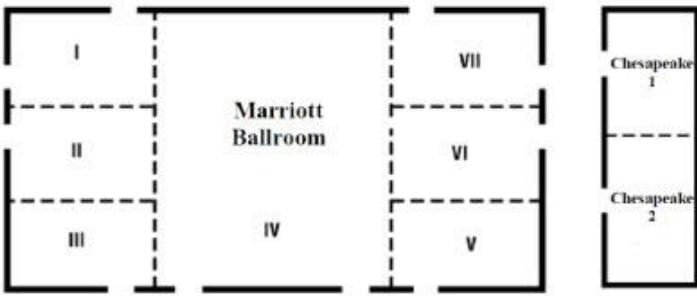
Located on the 3rd floor in the Madison Room
off of the Presidential Foyer

FIRST FLOOR

Norfolk Foyer

SECOND FLOOR**THIRD FLOOR**

Hampton Foyer

FOURTH FLOOR

Marriott Foyer



MARRIOTT
NORFOLK WATERSIDE