



2026

Trauma &  
Thriving Symposium

Friday April 24, 2026 | 8am-5pm | UT San Antonio Main Campus

# With Appreciation

## **CAST Professional Development Committee Members:**

Misty Mendoza  
Isabella Muniz  
Elaine Oyama-Avila  
Simoné Raaths  
Seth Robinson  
Angie Ruiz  
Natalie Santos  
Kaela Schneider  
Emma Tharp  
Cristal Velazquez  
Christa Vento-Jones  
Lorelei Voronin

## **Poster Presentation Reviewers:**

Emma Tharp  
Leslie Garza Mendoza  
Elaine Oyama  
Seth Robinson  
Lorelei Voronin

Special thanks to the UT San Antonio Department of Counseling Faculty and Staff, day of volunteers, and our 2026 Trauma and Thriving Symposium presenters.

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UT San Antonio  
Department of Counseling



# The Counselors Against Sex Trafficking Research Lab is hosting an **Art Supplies Drive**

The Counselors Against Sex Trafficking Research Lab is hosting an art supplies donation drive to support Magdalene House Austin, a survivor-led therapeutic community serving women who have experienced sex trafficking. Through long-term residential care, counseling access, and life and career development, Magdalene House fosters healing, belonging, and lasting independence. For survivors of complex trauma, healing is not always accessible through words alone; because trauma is often processed visually and somatically, art therapy provides a critical, evidence-informed pathway for expression, regulation, and meaning-making.



**MAGDALENE**  
AUS **HOUSE** TEX

Your donation of new art supplies will help create a personal art kit for each resident, transforming materials into tools for healing and restoration. Please scan the QR code to access the Amazon registry and contribute to this work.



## Supplies most needed:

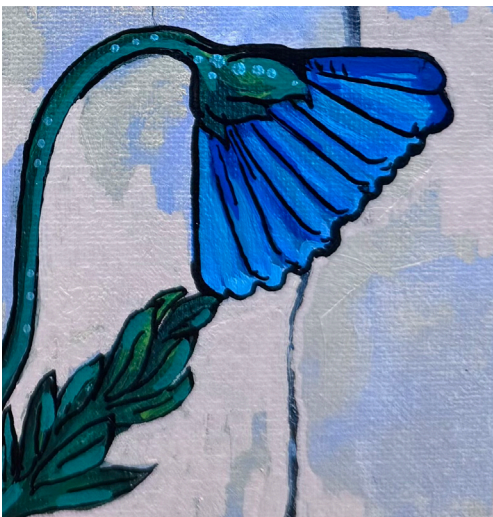
- Color Oil Pastels
- Color Pencils
- Watercolor Notebooks
- Acrylic Paint
- Acrylic Paint Pens
- Pocket Watercolors

Contact [lorelei.voronin@my.utsa.edu](mailto:lorelei.voronin@my.utsa.edu)  
for additional information

# Symposium Schedule

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8:00 am - 9:00 am	Registration
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Welcome & Keynote
10:15 am - 11:15 am	Content Sessions
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	Content Sessions
12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	Lunch on Your Own
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Content Sessions
2:45 pm - 3:45 pm	Poster Presentations and Internship Site Fair
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Roundtable Presentations & Final Remarks



## Connect with Us!

Website – [www.castrl.com](http://www.castrl.com)

Instagram – [@castresearch](https://www.instagram.com/castresearch)

Facebook – Counselors Against Sex  
Trafficking Research Lab



Keynote  
Speaker:  
Dr. Nissi  
Hamilton,  
MBA, Honorary  
Doctorate

Founder & CEO, Nissi's  
Network Inc.

Dr. Hamilton currently collaborates with federal and healthcare partners, including CommonSpirit Health to strengthen trauma-informed care models and equip medical professionals with the tools to identify and respond to trafficking within clinical settings. Her work bridges gaps between healthcare, law enforcement, and community-based organizations to ensure coordinated, survivor-centered responses.

With a background in military law enforcement as a Master-at-Arms in the United States Navy, Dr. Hamilton brings a unique operational lens to her work. She contributes to the Department of Defense's Combating Trafficking in Persons Task Force, supporting the implementation of anti-trafficking strategies across more than 50 defense components.



*Image source: Nissi's Network Inc.*

Her expertise informs policy, training, and prevention efforts impacting service members and global operations.

Dr. Hamilton also works alongside international partners, including the U.S. Embassy in the United Kingdom and academic institutions such as the University of Northampton, to advance global justice initiatives and cross-sector collaboration in combating exploitation.

A survivor of human trafficking, Dr. Hamilton's leadership is grounded in lived experience, academic excellence, and a commitment to systemic change. She holds multiple graduate degrees, including MBAs in Accounting and Human Resources Management, and a Bachelor of Science in Technical Management with a minor in Criminal Justice. Her

*Dr. Nissi Hamilton is a nationally recognized anti-human trafficking expert, federal partner, and survivor-leader dedicated to advancing victim-centered systems across the United States and internationally. As the Founder and CEO of Nissi's Network Inc., she leads innovative programs that provide housing, workforce development, and long-term stabilization for survivors of human trafficking and exploitation.*

work has earned her an honorary doctorate in Global Humanitarianism for her impact on vulnerable populations worldwide.

Through her training of law enforcement, counselors, and healthcare professionals, Dr. Hamilton challenges institutions to move beyond awareness toward accountability, equipping systems to not only identify trafficking—but to disrupt it.



Image source: Nissi's Network Inc.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify key indicators of sex and labor trafficking and differentiate trafficking-related trauma from other forms of interpersonal violence.
2. Describe the psychological and neurobiological impacts of complex trauma commonly observed in trafficking survivors, including attachment disruption, dissociation, and survival-based coping responses.
3. Apply trauma-informed, survivor-centered counseling principles that prioritize autonomy, safety, empowerment, and cultural responsiveness in clinical practice.
4. Evaluate ethical considerations when working with trafficking survivors, including mandated reporting, confidentiality, documentation sensitivity, and multidisciplinary collaboration.
5. Develop practical strategies for screening, stabilization, and clinician self-care to reduce vicarious trauma and promote sustainable trauma-informed practice.

# Content Sessions

10:15-11:15

## 1. Supervision in Practice: A Panel Discussion with Clinical Supervisors

Site Supervisor Panel Facilitated by: Devon E. Romero, PhD, LPC, NCC

Ashley Cuevas, PhD, LPC-S, NCC

Kevin Milligan, PhD, LPC-S, NCC

Ashley Davis, LPC

*Student Union Travis / Harris Combined Room (2.202 & 2.212)*

Effective supervision is both a professional responsibility and a relational art. This panel brings together experienced supervisors to share insights and engage in open dialogue on the most pressing challenges in counseling supervision today. Panelists will address key topics including establishing clear expectations, structure, and professional boundaries; navigating difficult supervisee situations; supporting supervisees working with high-risk and vulnerable client populations; and fostering supervisee professional identity development. Attendees will gain practical, experience-informed perspectives applicable across supervision contexts and settings. This session invites reflection, dialogue, and the exchange of strategies to strengthen supervisory practice and support the next generation of professional counselors.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

## 2. Addressing and Assessing Trauma: The Relevance of Ethical and Legal Awareness

Shawn L. Spurgeon, PhD, NCC, LPC-S, ACS

*Student Union Ballroom I & II (1.104 & 1.106)*

Counselors who work with victims of trauma must navigate a heightened level of anxiety and problematic behaviors. Addressing trauma involves sensitivity, cultural competence, and self-awareness. As such, trauma-informed and trauma-focused training involve a specific set of skills and theoretical approaches for helping clients. Counselors must understand the complexity related to working with trauma victims, including the delicate connection among ethical and legal responsibilities, personal values, and beliefs. Attendees will explore the relevant ethical codes and legal obligations counselors have for working with trauma victims and consider the role values and beliefs have in their work.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

# Content Sessions

11:30-12:30

## 1. From Crisis to Connection: Play Therapy, Disasters, and Community Engagement

Mónica Rodríguez Delgado PhD, LPC, RPT

*Student Union Travis / Harris Combined Room (2.202 & 2.212)*

Children impacted by disasters and community crises face disruptions that affect safety, attachment, and development. This presentation explores disaster mental health through a play therapy lens, emphasizing key constructs such as disaster frameworks, community crisis, and social vulnerability. The presenter will differentiate between vicarious trauma and shared trauma in disaster contexts and examine their impact on clinicians. Drawing from disaster play therapy work with Puerto Rican children and families, The presenter will highlight culturally responsive, developmentally appropriate interventions. Attention will also be given to ethical engagement when entering communities as outsiders. Participants will gain practical strategies for supporting children and fostering resilience.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

## 2. Reframing the Narrative: The Intersection of Disability and Trauma and Strategies For Affirming Practice

Jennifer Cook, PhD, LPC (WI), NCC, ACS

Malvika Behl, PhD, NCC, LPC (TX), LPCC (OH), School Counselor (OH)

*Student Union Ballroom I & II (1.104 & 1.106)*

In this presentation, we explore the intersections of trauma and disability to equip counselors with frameworks to support clients navigating both experiences. Participants will learn how trauma can precede and accompany disability — and how ableist systems compound harm people with disabilities experience. By understanding the medical, moral, and environmental models of disability combined with trauma-informed care, we challenge deficit-based models and center on client strengths and lived experiences. Counselors will gain practical strategies for affirming practice, ethical considerations, and tools to advocate within systems that often marginalize disabled clients in clinical, school, and community settings.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

# Content Sessions

1:30-2:30

## 1. Site Supervisor Orientation: Strengthening Partnerships with UT San Antonio

Priscilla Rose, PhD, LPC, MBA, GCSC

Claudia G. Interiano-Shiverdecker, PhD, LPC

*Student Union Travis / Harris Combined Room (2.202 & 2.212)*

Site supervisors play a pivotal role in shaping the next generation of counseling professionals. This interactive orientation session will provide an opportunity for supervisors affiliated with the UT San Antonio Department of Counseling to reflect on their roles, share insights, and collaborate with faculty and peers. Attendees will gain valuable perspectives on common themes in student feedback regarding site experiences and supervision, allowing for a deeper understanding of strengths and areas for enhancement. Through open dialogue with the UT San Antonio Clinical Committee faculty and fellow site supervisors, participants will explore best practices, exchange strategies, and reinforce their commitment to fostering meaningful and effective training environments. Join us for a dynamic discussion that will empower you to refine your supervisory approach and strengthen your partnership with UT San Antonio.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

## 2. The Hidden Imprint: Trauma, the Brain, and Neurofeedback Healing

Laurel Jackson-Cook, PhD, LPC

Emma Katherine Tharp, MS, BCN-L, LPC Associate

Whitney Zahar Rich, MS, NCC

*Student Union Ballroom I & II (1.104 & 1.106)*

Trauma leaves a lasting imprint on the brain, often disrupting regulation, emotional processing, and overall functioning. This presentation explores the neurobiological impact of trauma, including patterns of dysregulation commonly observed in individuals with chronic stress and post-traumatic symptoms. Participants will gain an understanding of how neurofeedback can be used as a non-invasive intervention to support brain regulation and promote healing. Through a combination of research, clinical insight, and practical application, this session highlights how integrating neurofeedback into trauma-informed care can enhance treatment outcomes and support long-term recovery for diverse client populations.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

## CEU Certificates and Certificates of Attendance

You must complete a Sign-in Survey and Exit Survey for each session attended in order to receive your CEU Certificate or Certificate of Attendance. Sign-in and Exit Surveys will be available via QR codes at the start and conclusion of each session.

# Poster Presentations

2:45-3:45

## **Thriving Through Culture: Cultural Resilience from Self to Systems in Counseling**

Simoné Raaths, BA

Our understanding of resilience has shifted from individualistic conceptualization to an ecological one. This shift was encouraged by emphasis on the interaction between individuals and their environments (Ungarm et al. 2013). It included emerging research into cultural resilience, which can be defined as resilience of and resilience through culture. Sauda (2025) broadly defines it as the capacity to draw upon cultural beliefs, practices, values, and social structures to maintain well-being in the face of adversity. Cultural resilience develops and operates across all socio ecological levels, from micro-, to macrosystems (Ungar, et al., 2013). Understanding how cultural resilience develops and shows up across these levels can help counselors design more culturally responsive interventions (Kirmayer et al., 2011). Counselors have an ethical responsibility to provide the best possible care to clients by embracing a multicultural approach and developing cultural competence (ACA, 2014).

## **Between Algorithm and Empathy: Counseling Student Development in the Age of AI**

Isabella Nieto, BA, MS, LPC Associate

Estefania Cavazos-Reyes, BS

Aliyah Faith Gomez

Cristal Velazquez, BS

Grace Allbritton

Viviana Sanchez

Beau Henry, BS

Artificial intelligence (AI) is, not only rapidly integrating into mainstream use, but also into higher education, reshaping the training and identity development of students. When it comes to clinical mental health counseling, the field is confronted with a unique ethical component that necessitates further exploration into the role AI can have on student development and, thus, student thriving.

This poster explores the ways AI influences counseling trainees, including its impact on clinical skill development, ethical decision-making, self-efficacy, and reflective practice, exploring how AI may both support and hinder thriving. Drawing on emerging literature and preliminary data, the poster examines both the opportunities and potential risks of generative AI. A special focus is placed on counseling student perspectives on the role of AI in their development and considers implications for counselor educators in integrating AI responsibly into curricula while maintaining alignment with professional standards and ethical guidelines and personal well-being.

# Poster Presentations

2:45-3:45

## **Integrating Neurofeedback with Trauma-Informed Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Trauma Treatment**

Christopher Armstrong, MA

This presentation explores the integration of neurofeedback with trauma-informed cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) to enhance trauma treatment outcomes. Trauma can disrupt emotional regulation, cognitive processing, and neurophysiological functioning, limiting engagement in evidence-based interventions. Trauma-informed CBT is a well-established approach that addresses maladaptive beliefs, avoidance, coping deficits, and trauma-related symptoms. However, some clients may benefit from additional support targeting physiological dysregulation. Neurofeedback is presented as an adjunctive intervention to improve self-regulation and readiness for trauma processing. A phased framework is outlined in which neurofeedback supports stabilization, while trauma-informed CBT addresses cognitive restructuring and trauma processing. Attendees will review the rationale, emerging research, clinical applications, and key ethical considerations of this integrative approach.

## **The Invisible Backpack: Understanding and Supporting Students Carrying Hidden Experiences**

Misty Mendoza, BA

Many students walk into their classrooms carrying an “invisible backpack” filled with the emotional weight of difficult life experiences. These unseen burdens can shape how they behave, connect with others, and engage in learning. This presentation invites educators to look beyond surface behaviors and better understand how trauma can impact students’ emotional and academic lives. It explores common signs teachers may notice, such as withdrawal, heightened alertness, difficulty focusing, or strong emotional reactions, while emphasizing the importance of empathy, connection, and creating a sense of safety. By fostering awareness and a compassionate approach, trauma-informed teaching empowers educators to support students not only in their learning, but in their healing and growth as well.

# Poster Presentations

2:45-3:45

## **Beyond the Uniform: Understanding the Culture and Counseling Military Families.**

Grace Allbritton, Donghun Lee, Ph.D., NCC

Military families face challenges like moves and deployments. Although resilient, the effects of trauma, behavioral changes, and stress can overwhelm the spouse and children. These struggles affect the family unit before, during, and after service, requiring more than resilience and words. Presenters will address challenges military families experience throughout the deployment cycle. The poster emphasizes multiple evidence-based approaches for each family member's needs, including trauma informed support for service members, systemic guidance for spouses, and developmental intervention for the children. By analyzing internal symptoms such as anxiety and somatic issues, the presentation offers a theoretical framework for clinicians to help families move toward clinical thriving.

## **Is This Thriving? Rethinking Progress in Counseling**

Kaela Schneider, MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling Student

The concept of thriving is increasingly used in counseling language, yet remains inconsistently defined and rarely used in practice. A review of 169 counseling-related articles found only 12 included “thriving” in the title, all published after 2018, suggesting it is an emerging construct. Across the literature, thriving is often used colloquially (e.g., “survive and thrive”) or within post-trauma frameworks, with limited clarity on definition or measurement. Although research suggests thriving is multidimensional and can occur with or without adversity, counseling practice often ties it to trauma outcomes. This creates a gap, as clinicians lack tools to conceptualize growth beyond symptom reduction. This poster proposes a multidimensional framework of thriving as growth across domains, visualized through a radar graph. This model conceptualizes thriving as an uneven, ongoing process and offers a practical, client-centered way to assess progress beyond survival.

# Poster Presentations

2:45-3:45

## **Haunted by Night: Persistent Trauma-Related Nightmares as Barriers to Thriving**

Viviana Sanchez, BS

This presentation reviews established treatments for trauma-related nightmares and their limitations and explores emerging research on innovative techniques. Nightmares impact wellbeing through poor sleep quality, increased dream anxiety, risk for suicide and relapse of PTSD symptoms. Although current interventions show effectiveness for some individuals, nightmares persist. Outcome statistics highlight the need for further research on trauma-related nightmare treatments. This poster examines findings on how emerging and experimental dream techniques can be integrated with existing treatments to increase successful outcomes and inform future research.

## **Supporting Immigrant Resilience After Sex Trafficking: The Counselor's Role**

Ruby Torres

Human trafficking is a global crime prevalent in-between borders and often leads to sex trafficking. In result, immigrant individuals are at a higher risk. The impact it has on an individual's mental health is significant. Many individuals suffer from trauma and face social stigma. This can lead to feelings of helplessness and shame and can deter an individual from seeking mental health services. To facilitate dialogue with victims, counselors should create a safe therapeutic relationship and environment (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2026).

Many post-exit programs for human trafficking victims focus on reintegration into society but do not provide trauma-focused mental health services. It is the counselor's role to advocate for such services to be included in post-exit programs. Additionally, counselors should educate themselves on trauma-focused counseling interventions to better serve individuals who have come from human trafficking situations (Dell et al., 2019).

# Poster Presentations

2:45-3:45

## **Supporting Non-Offending Caregivers After Child Abuse: Implications for Counselor Training**

Cynthia De Quevedo Galindo, MS, LPC Associate

Samantha Abelow, MA, LPC Associate

Child abuse affects not only the child victim but also the non-offending caregivers (NOCs), who often experience significant emotional distress, including guilt, shame, fear, and secondary traumatic stress. The response of non-offending caregivers is a critical protective factor in a child's recovery following abuse disclosure. Supportive caregiver responses can reduce barriers to disclosure and are associated with improved psychological outcomes for children, particularly in cases of child sexual abuse. Despite this, many counselors receive limited training on how to effectively support non-offending caregivers while also addressing the child's trauma and promoting safety within the family system. This poster reviews current literature on the experiences of non-offending caregivers following abuse disclosure and highlights trauma-informed counseling considerations for working with caregivers. Implications for counselor training and clinical practice are discussed.

## **Supporting Research Identity Development Through Mentorship and Modeling: A Novel Mini-Series Approach**

Emma Tharp, MS, LPC Associate, BCN-L

Seth T. Robinson, MS, LPC Associate, LCDC

Lorelei Voronin, LPC-S, ATR-BC

Elaine Oyama, MS, LPC Associate, NCC

Devon E. Romero, PhD, LPC, NCC

This poster presentation introduces an interactive research series designed to cultivate a sense of thriving among both master's and doctoral students. The research series was created to support the research identity development of master's-level counseling students while simultaneously fostering doctoral students' growth as educators and mentors. Grounded in the practitioner-scholar model, the series consisted of five workshop-style sessions in which doctoral students guided master's students from explorations in initial research curiosity to conference-ready poster presentations, supported by faculty mentorship and modeling. The multi-tiered mentorship model is the key innovation of the mini-series. While master's students gained clarity in research direction, confidence, and dissemination skills, doctoral students strengthened their ability to facilitate learning through collaborative engagement, creating reciprocal developmental benefits.

# Poster Presentations

2:45-3:45

## **Caring Without Carrying: Vicarious Trauma and Self-Assessment for Mental Health Professionals**

Elaine Oyama, MS, LPC Associate, NCC

Christa Venta-Jones, BA

Mental health professionals are uniquely susceptible to vicarious trauma (VT) - the transformation of a helper's inner world through engagement with clients' traumatic experiences. This presentation provides a foundational review of VT, distinguishing it from related constructs such as burnout and compassion fatigue, and situating it within the ethical obligations of clinical practice. Attendees will explore the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL-5) as both a screening and predictive tool for identifying early markers of VT across cognitive, emotional, and somatic domains. Participants will leave with practical tools to assess their own risk, implement individualized self-care plans, and embed VT-informed care into their professional identities and ethical practice.

## **LGBTQ-AI, Developing Resilience in the Digital Era**

Amy Cruz

Lauren Applegate

Resilience development has been a hallmark of the LGBTQ+ community's strength when faced with oppression (Singh & Chun, 2010). Online methods of communication, community, and resilience are documented as protective factors when individuals experience gaps in offline support (The Trevor Project, 2025; Wagaman et al., 2020). Emerging digital tools, such as conversational AI technology, bridge gaps in connection, fostering social inclusiveness for LGBTQ+ people (Bragazzi et al., 2023). Despite the inherent risk factors of internet usage, the development of AI-enhanced tools can educate, empower, and advocate for LGBTQ+ voices in online spaces. In 2025 alone, the ACLU tracked 616 anti-LGBTQ+ bills in the United States, highlighting the increase of sociopolitical shifts against this population. Due to increasing systemic oppression, it is imperative to provide diverse methods of resilience development so individuals and providers can continue accessing competent resources for care.

# Poster Presentations

2:45-3:45

## **Faith, Shame, and Self: LGBTQ Religious Trauma Reconsidered**

Daniel Olvera, M.Ed., LPC Associate, NCC

Religious trauma among LGBTQ+ individuals is gaining attention in counseling discourse, yet much of the literature emphasizes cognitive-behavioral and sociocultural frameworks. While valuable, these approaches may not fully capture the depth of intrapsychic conflict, identity fragmentation, and internalized shame following spiritually mediated harm. This poster offers a psychodynamic conceptualization of religious trauma among queer individuals, focusing on how religious environments shape internal world dynamics and relational patterns. From this perspective, rigid moral hierarchies and conditional acceptance may become internalized, producing conflict between authentic identity and belonging. This poster examines shame as an organizing affect, splitting between acceptable and authentic self-states, homophobia as an introjected object, and religious authority as superego formation.

## **Is Trauma and Crisis Support Lacking in Hispanic Communities? Things to Consider**

Isabella Muñiz

As counselors, it is our responsibility to maintain multicultural competence by understanding how systemic implications, cultural beliefs, and historical implications affect the lives of specifically marginalized groups. This poster focuses on the association between historic implications, such as generational trauma; cultural beliefs, such as machismo culture; systemic barriers, such as redlining; and the lack of accessibility to trauma and crisis help in Hispanic dominated communities. Further, we will discuss implications counselors can take to help support this demographic such as, advocating for coverage of mental health care for those without insurance or limited insurance; advocating for public education in Hispanic rural communities on mental health and mental health resources; and implementing culturally responsive interventions for Hispanic clients with trauma.

No CEU or Certificate of Attendance offered for Poster Presentations

# Student Internship Site Fair

2:45-3:45

**Looking for a practicum or internship site? Check out the Internship Site Fair and connect with prospective site supervisors from a number of affiliated-sites.**

1. Alamo Colleges, Palo Alto College
2. UT Health Science Center
3. Atascosa County Juvenile Justice Center
4. Nueva Vida Behavioral Health Associates
5. Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department
6. Northwest Vista Community College
7. Our Lady of the Lake Counseling & Wellness Services
8. Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Inc.
9. Respite Care of San Antonio
10. Bariatric Counseling Center
11. UT Health Transitional Care Clinic
12. Crosspoint, Inc.
13. Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department
14. Wellness 360 at UTSA
15. Texas A&M University San Antonio Student Counseling Center
16. Texas State University
17. Guadalupe County Children's Advocacy Center
18. Alamo Heights Counseling Center
19. SJRC Texas | Belong
20. Monarch Behavioral Health, PLLC
21. Medina Valley ISD
22. Children's Bereavement Center
23. Applewhite Recovery Center



# Roundtable Presentations

4:00-5:00

*Student Union Ballroom I & II (1.104 & 1.106)*

## **1. Exploring advanced personalized treatment options and whole person care approach when working with substance use patients and/or trauma related disorders.**

Andrea Almaguer-Botero, PhD, LPC, LCSC Intern

Individuals with substance use disorders (SUD) and trauma-related conditions often present with complex, overlapping needs that require more than traditional approaches of care. This session will explore how clinicians can implement more comprehensive approaches to caring for individuals with SUD and trauma-related disorders. The discussion will emphasize the importance of integrating a holistic approach in a clinical setting by considering biological, developmental, psychological, and behavioral factors. Through interactive dialogue and shared experiences, this session aims to equip clinicians with actionable insights and practical tools to deliver more personalized and effective care for individuals with SUD and trauma-related disorders.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

## **2. Integrating Dialectal Behavior Therapy and Empowered Storytelling to Empower Survivors of IPV/DV**

Amanda Almendarez, MS, LPC, NCC

Jennifer Cook, PhD, LPC (WI), NCC, ACS

Domestic violence (DV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) affect millions of people all over the world. Many survivors struggle to manage the multitude of trauma symptoms, to complete daily tasks, and experience disempowerment that results in losing their voice—their inability to own and speak to their experiences. Due to the complex nature of DV/IPV, counselors must integrate interventions to meet clients' needs. Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) has been shown to be successful with individuals with trauma symptoms. While not yet explored in the counseling literature, empowered storytelling (ES) holds great promise for survivors of DV/IPV. In this round table, we will explore different experiences working with survivors of DV/IPV, analyze the proposed new integrated intervention of DBT and ES, and receive feedback of the new method and possible future research ideas.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

# Roundtable Presentations

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4:00-5:00

*Student Union Ballroom I & II (1.104 & 1.106)*

## **3. Healing Through Play and Creative Arts: Trauma-Informed Interventions for Children and Adolescents**

Peggy L. Ceballos, PhD, LPC Associate, CCPT-S, CPRT-S

This session explores the use of play therapy and creative arts interventions to address trauma in children and adolescents. Participants will examine how trauma impacts development and emotional expression, and how nonverbal, creative modalities can support healing in safe and developmentally appropriate ways. Practical strategies, including art, sand tray, and play-based techniques, will be shared to help clinicians engage clients who may struggle to verbalize their experiences. Emphasis will be placed on culturally responsive and trauma-informed practices that can be applied across clinical and school-based settings.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

## **4. When the Political is Personal: Trauma, Fear, and the Weight of Division**

Madelyn Duffey, PhD, LPC

In today's political climate, many clients are navigating heightened stress, fear, and disconnection shaped by polarization, elections, and rapidly evolving events. This roundtable invites participants to explore how politics can function as a source of trauma, impacting individuals, communities, and helping professionals alike. Recognizing that politics has real and material implications for people's lives, the discussion will examine how fear, anxiety, and chronic stress emerge in response to ongoing sociopolitical conditions. Together, we will reflect on the influence of media exposure, the toll of sustained civic engagement and volunteer burnout, and the diverse ways people experience political stress. The conversation will center on practical, trauma-informed strategies for fostering resilience, setting boundaries, and supporting well-being amid ongoing political tension.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

# Roundtable Presentations

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4:00-5:00

*Student Union Ballroom I & II (1.104 & 1.106)*

## **5. Beyond Symptom Reduction: Military Service–Related Trauma and Fostering Conditions for Posttraumatic Growth**

Crystal D. Hahn, PhD

Military service–related PTSD is shaped by complex interactions among culture, environment, and trauma etiology, yet PTSD treatment for service members and veterans has long centered on symptom reduction and deficit-based models. High dropout rates from trauma-focused therapies highlight the need for alternative, culturally responsive approaches. This roundtable explores military cultural factors, distinctions among service-related trauma types, and the clinical relevance of post-traumatic growth (PTG). Participants will learn how to assess for PTG and ethically integrate growth-oriented strategies into treatment, offering veterans pathways to recovery that attend to identity, meaning-making, and strengths beyond symptom reduction.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

## **6. Consensual, Unwanted Sex (CUS) and PTSD: Implications for Trauma-Informed Counseling**

Shandra Harris, PhD, LPC, NCC, CTP

When consent is not enough. Consensual unwanted sex in committed relationships and the frequency of these experiences, and the reasons individuals' consent, shape their psychological impact. The session considers how internalized expectations, cultural norms, and relational dynamics, including interdependence and perceived obligation, influence sexual decision-making, even in the absence of explicit pressure. It also raises critical questions about how posttraumatic stress disorder is defined and assessed, and whether current frameworks fully capture clients' lived experiences. The session concludes with trauma-informed assessment and intervention strategies to improve recognition, conceptualization, and treatment of clients reporting consensual unwanted sexual experiences.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

# Roundtable Presentations

4:00-5:00

*Student Union Ballroom I & II (1.104 & 1.106)*

## **7. Suicide Assessment with Sex Trafficked Persons: Using the IS PATH WARM and Columbia Suicide Severity Scale to Provide an Immediate Suicide Risk Assessment**

Gerald A. Juhnke, EdD, LPC, NCC, MAC, ACS

Seth Robinson, MS, LPC Associate, LCDC

Servando Rodriguez Barajas, MS, LPC

Rachel E. King, MS, LPC, LCDC, NCC

Elaine Oyama, MS, LPC Associate, NCC

Julie K. Archer, BA

Survivors of sex trafficking represent a highly vulnerable population with elevated suicide ideation and suicide risk. Despite increasing awareness of human trafficking, many counselors report limited suicide risk assessment training. This presentation will describe the IS PATH WARM and Columbia Suicide Severity Scale and how to use each in way that addresses the special needs of those persons who have been trafficked.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

## **8. Supporting BIPOC Clients: Trauma-Informed Therapy When the World Feels Unsafe**

Krystal Lázaro, MS, LPC Associate, NCC

Luz Varela Morales, LPC, NCC

In today's climate, BIPOC clients experience anxiety, hypervigilance, and concerns rooted in chronic threat, systemic inequities, and policy-driven realities. Traditional trauma-informed interventions offer a foundation for clinical practice; however, expanding these frameworks to account for chronic stressors is critical to avoid pathologizing symptoms and to support culturally responsive care.

This presentation examines trauma as both single-event and chronic exposure, highlighting the impact of systemic and policy-driven stressors on BIPOC communities. Participants will explore how culturally responsive, trauma-informed approaches can be adapted to these contexts, and discuss practical strategies that honor client experiences, reduce retraumatization, and promote equitable mental health care.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

# Roundtable Presentations

4:00-5:00

*Student Union Ballroom I & II (1.104 & 1.106)*

## **9. Moral Injury in Forensic Contexts: Examining Impact and Advancing Targeted Interventions**

Abraham J. Leal, MS, LPC Associate, NCC, CTP

Moral injury (MI)—psychological, behavioral, spiritual, emotional, and social impact from perpetrating, witnessing, or failing to prevent acts violating moral beliefs—remains understudied in forensic populations. Although emerging strategies adapted from veteran-focused work highlight the promise of values-based, compassion-focused, and narrative approaches, their application in forensic contexts is still developing. This roundtable invites attendees to explore current conceptualizations of MI within forensic settings and to collaboratively examine the shift toward more targeted, culturally responsive interventions. There will be discussion surrounding trauma-informed therapeutic strategies and restorative justice practices that may support accountability, self-forgiveness, and improved treatment engagement. Together, attendees will consider the existing evidence base, identify critical research priorities, and reflect on opportunities to advance approaches that may reduce recidivism risk and promote authentic post-traumatic growth and thriving among those involved in the justice system.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

## **10. “Breathing is Boring!”: Creative, Ethical Approaches to Foundational Counseling Skills for Children and Adolescents with Complex Trauma**

Lorelei Voronin, LPC-S, ATR-BC

This presentation reframes foundational counseling skills through creative, developmentally responsive approaches for children and adolescents experiencing complex trauma, including long-term neglect and abuse. This interactive roundtable engages participants in experiential activities that demonstrate how creativity bridges gaps between emotion and language while restoring developmentally appropriate behaviors. Grounded in ethical and culturally responsive practice, discussion will address challenges such as extended rapport-building, resistance to traditional talk therapy, and disrupted therapeutic continuity. Participants will collaboratively explore best practices and leave with practical, engaging strategies for integrating creativity into trauma-informed counseling.

1 CEU for LPC or a Certificate of Attendance

# Hosts

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## Claudia G. Interiano-Shiverdecker, PhD, LPC

Associate Professor, University of Texas at San Antonio

Dr. Claudia G. Interiano-Shiverdecker is a Fulbright Scholar and an Associate Professor in the Department of Counseling at the University of Texas at Antonio. She received her master's degree in clinical mental health counseling from the University of Wisconsin-Stout and a Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Texas specialized in providing bilingual counseling services to Spanish-speaking populations. Previously, she was a licensed psychologist in Honduras and worked with Spanish-speaking adolescents. Her research primarily focuses on (a) social justice and multicultural considerations for marginalized communities, particularly the

Latine community; (b) counseling competencies to work with trauma and specific populations vulnerable to trauma; (c) advocating for underrepresented populations in higher education and (d) bilingual counseling and supervision. Since 2015, she has been involved in some capacity with both large externally funded and institutionally funded projects focused on advocating for refugees, sex trafficking victims, and bilingual counselors. For example, along with colleagues at UT San Antonio she received a \$396,705 grant by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to develop a clinical placement program called Counselors Against Sex Trafficking. She is the coordinator for the Bilingual Counseling Certificate and the Study Abroad program to Oaxaca, Mexico in the Department of Counseling at the University of Texas at San Antonio. She co-authored the book, *Preparing Culturally Efficacious Bilingual Counselors through Theory and Case Studies*.

# Hosts



## Priscilla Rose, PhD, LPC, MBA, GCSC

Associate Professor, University of Texas at San Antonio

Dr. Priscilla Rose is an Associate Professor in the Department of Counseling. She graduated with a Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from Ohio University. Dr. Priscilla Rose is a Licensed Professional Counselor and has been providing clinical counseling for over 10 years to diverse client populations.

The overarching focus of her research agenda is to augment counselor competence in the promotion of mental health and well-being by leveraging a strengths-based positive psychological lens, spanning two interrelated research pathways: (a) training and program development and (b) innovative counseling and teaching practices. She has pursued nearly \$1.137 million in competitive research funds and authored 41 peer-reviewed publications and

over 75 conference presentations. She holds several leadership positions including Director of the Strengths and Wellbeing – Innovation Research Lab and affiliate faculty at CAST Research Lab at UT San Antonio, and President of the Association for Specialists in Group Counseling (ASGW), a national division of the American Counseling Association (ACA). She is the recipient of the Texas Counseling Association (TCA) Research Award, Professional Advancement Award by ASGW, Professional Writing Award by TCA, and nominee of UT San Antonio Presidential Teaching Excellence Award, both in 2023 and 2021. She served as the training consultant for the THECB grant awarded to Dr. Romero and Dr. Interiano-Shiverdecker, where she coordinated a sex trafficking-specific training for students at UT San Antonio. Due to her expertise in curriculum development, she has been invited to be a part of large program development initiatives at departmental, university, and professional levels.

# Hosts

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## Devon E. Romero, PhD, LPC, NCC

Associate Professor and Doctoral Program Director,  
University of Texas at San Antonio

Dr. Devon E. Romero is an Associate Professor and Doctoral Program Director in the Department of Counseling at the University of Texas at San Antonio, where she also serves as the Chapter Faculty Advisor for the Sigma Alpha Chi Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota. She has a master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, a doctorate in Counselor Education and Supervision, and a graduate certificate in Quantitative Educational Research from the University of Alabama. She is a National Certified Counselor and Licensed Professional Counselor in the state of Texas with specialized experience in marriage and family counseling, child and adolescent counseling, neurofeedback, and trauma. Dr. Romero has over a decade of experience working with and managing large federally funded projects, smaller externally funded projects, and institutionally funded research. Her scholarship focuses on trauma among historically marginalized, at-risk, and underserved populations, using complementary interventions and outcome research to inform counselor training and practice. Her research also includes projects related to professional counselor identity development, with emphasis on legislative professional advocacy and research identity development. She is co-founder of the Counselors Against Sex Trafficking Research Lab, Secretary for Chi Sigma Iota International, Treasurer for the Texas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, and serves on the editorial boards for the *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health* and the *Journal of Counselor Leadership and Advocacy*.

# Presenters



## Andrea Almaguer-Botero, PhD, LPC, LCDC Intern

### Founder Of Grounded Space LLC

Dr. Andrea Almaguer-Botero, LPC, LCDC-I, has a master's degree in counseling psychology with a bilingual counselor certification from Texas A&M International University in 2016. Dr. Almaguer-Botero earned her PhD in Rehabilitation Counseling at The University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley in May 2020. Dr. Almaguer-Botero has worked as a professional mental health counselor for 10 years and is EMDR trained. She has worked in different types of settings such as immigration and refugee centers, substance abuse clinics, schools and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit providing trauma and crisis counseling for different populations. Dr. Almaguer also served as a content expert in a campaign for the American Academy of Pediatric to help NICU's implement mental health services. Currently,

Dr. Almaguer-Botero's has her own private practice called Grounded Space LLC, which provides counseling to Texas residents. Additionally, Dr. Almaguer holds a lecturer position at UTSA teaching graduate courses for the department of counseling and has been teaching graduate courses for 5 years.



## Amanda Almendarez, MS, LPC, NCC

### Doctoral Student, University of Texas at San Antonio

Amanda Almendarez is a third-year doctoral student at University of Texas at San Antonio. She is also a Licensed Professional Counselor who has been practicing for the last five years. She received her master's degree in clinical Mental Health Counseling from Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi in December of 2020. Amanda specializes in trauma and works with domestic violence survivors, veterans, adolescents and adults. She also works with grief, anxiety, depression, and personality disorders, using Dialectical Behavioral Therapy and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. During the last year, Amanda served as the Awards Committee Chair for Sigma Alpha Chi of Chi Sigma Iota and the Legislative Liaison of South Central Regional Counseling Association.

# Presenters



## Julie K. Archer

### Master's Student, University of Texas at San Antonio

Julie K. Archer is a first semester graduate student in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at the University of Texas at San Antonio. With over thirty years of experience working in private, state, and government sectors, she brings well-developed administrative, communication, and leadership skills to her work. Julie is passionate about supporting individuals as they heal from trauma and navigate difficult life circumstances. She is particularly interested in working with survivors of abuse, helping them rebuild confidence and develop healthier, more fulfilling ways of living. She values empathy, compassion, and acceptance, and believes the individual's capacity for adaptation and growth is limitless. Upon completion of the

CMHC graduate program, Julie plans to pursue licensure and serve individuals and communities in San Antonio.



## Malvika Behl, PhD, LPC

### Assistant Professor, University of Texas at San Antonio

Malvika Behl is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Counseling at the University of Texas at San Antonio. She has been a Counselor Educator for approximately 10 years. She has experience counseling children, adolescents, and adults in a community and school setting. She is the co-founder of the Innovations in Disability, Economic Equity, and Addictions (IDEA) Research Lab. Her research interest primarily focuses on a) mental health of individuals with disabilities, specifically, neurodivergent people and people with neurodevelopmental disorders, b) the impact of the diagnosis of a neurodevelopmental disorder on the family system, c) the impact of media on the growing adolescent mind, and d) understanding the experience of international students in counselor education.

# Presenters



## Peggy Ceballos, PhD, LPC Associate, CCPT-S, CPRT-S

Department Chair and Professor, University of Texas  
at San Antonio

Dr. Peggy Ceballos is a Professor and Department Chair of the Counseling Program at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Her research centers on integrated care services, culturally informed humanistic play therapy, and school-based interventions that support minoritized children and families. She has authored numerous peer-reviewed publications and is actively engaged in federally funded grants addressing health disparities.

Dr. Ceballos has held several leadership roles in the counseling profession, including Past President of Chi Sigma Iota International and President-Elect of the Child-Centered Play Therapy International Association. She has delivered more than 80 professional presentations and has been recognized with 12 professional awards for her contributions to counseling, research, and professional service.



## Jennifer Cook, PhD, LPC, NCC, ACS

Associate Professor, University of Texas at San Antonio

Jennifer M. Cook, PhD, LPC (WI), NCC, ACS is an associate professor in the Department of Counseling at UT San Antonio. Dr. Cook is multiculturally focused counselor educator who utilizes strength-based methods, culturally relevant practices, and social justice advocacy. Her research focuses on disability, addictions, economic disparities, and integrating sociocultural identities. Dr. Cook has published extensively, completed over 40 national and international peer-reviewed presentations, and recently published a multicultural counseling textbook.

# Presenters



## Ashley Cuevas, PhD, LPC-S, NCC

Assistant Professor of Practice and SFCC Clinic  
Director, University of Texas at San Antonio

Dr. Ashley Cuevas is an Assistant Professor of Practice at UT San Antonio. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor-Supervisor with a passion for helping individuals navigate life's challenges with clarity and confidence. Dr. Cuevas serves as the Clinical Director of The Sarabia Family Counseling Center offering a supportive, student-centered environment that fosters learning and growth. She enjoys mentoring and teaching students often through Practicum and Internship masters and doctoral level courses.



## Ashley Davis, LPC

Lead Behavioral Health Consultant, Bluebonnet Trails  
– Seguin, Luling, and Lockhart

Ashley Davis is The Behavioral Health Consultant for Bluebonnet Trails Community Services, serving the communities of Seguin, Lockhart, and Luling. She also serves as the Lead Behavioral Health Consultant and subject matter expert for the Bluebonnet Trails Behavioral Health Consultant team. Ashley is a Licensed Professional Counselor and operates a virtual private practice. She is a two-time graduate of The University of Texas at San Antonio, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology in 2014 and a Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling in 2019. Ashley is passionate about integrated behavioral health and began her career as a youth and family counselor at a nonprofit agency in New Braunfels, Texas.

In this role, she had the opportunity to train internship students completing their practicum hours, where she discovered her passion for teaching and clinical supervision. In her current role as a Behavioral Health Consultant, Ashley continues to pursue this passion by supervising graduate-level interns interested in integrated care. She enjoys supporting emerging mental and behavioral health professionals as they build confidence, develop their clinical style, and serve the communities around them.

# Presenters



## Madelyn Duffey, PhD, LPC

Assistant Professor of Practice, University of Texas at San Antonio

Madelyn Duffey, PhD, LPC, is an Assistant Professor of Practice in Counseling at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Her work focuses on creative counseling pedagogy, interdisciplinary education, multicultural identity development, historical trauma, and the intersection of politics and mental health. She is a Chapter Faculty Co-Advisor for the Sigma Alpha Chi chapter of Chi Sigma Iota, where she previously served as treasurer and awards co-chair, and was a Chi Sigma Iota Intern (2023–2024). Dr. Duffey has contributed to numerous committees and task forces for the American Counseling Association (ACA), the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES), and the International Institute for the Advancement of Counseling Theory (IIACT). She is currently an editorial board member for the SACES journal *Teaching and Supervision in Counseling*.



## Crystal Hahn, PhD

Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Texas at San Antonio

Dr. Crystal Hahn is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Counseling Program at the University of Texas at San Antonio and a counselor educator with over a decade of experience serving military-affiliated individuals and families. Her professional background includes child development, university, and mental health settings. Dr. Hahn is both the spouse of a veteran and the child of a service member, bringing lived experience to her work with counselors-in-training. Her teaching areas include biopsychosocial aspects of addiction, assessment in counseling, professional ethics, and career counseling. She has published in multiple peer-reviewed journals and presented locally and nationally on veteran and student-veteran mental health.

# Presenters

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## Shandra Harris, PhD, LPC, NCC, CTP

### Licensed Professional Counselor, Innova Recovery Center

Shandra Harris is a Licensed Professional Counselor at Innova Trauma and Recovery Center in San Antonio, Texas, where she provides trauma-informed care to individuals experiencing mood disorders and posttraumatic stress. She earned her doctorate in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Texas at San Antonio. Her dissertation examined the relationship between consensual unwanted sex and posttraumatic stress, with a focus on how frequency and underlying motivations for consenting contribute to trauma-related outcomes. She plans to continue providing clinical services, publishing her research in peer-reviewed journals, and pursuing opportunities to teach counseling courses at the university level.

# Presenters



## Laurel Jackson-Cook, PhD., LPC

Assistant Professor of Practice, University of Texas at San Antonio; Owner, The Well Mind Center of San Antonio

Dr. Jackson-Cook earned her PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). She is an Assistant Professor of Practice at UTSA and also works in private practice, specializing in trauma and offering counseling services, including EMDR, Neurofeedback and biofeedback. With over 40 years of experience, Dr. Jackson-Cook has worked with diverse populations, including children in Child Protective Services, victims of domestic violence, and individuals struggling with addiction.

She has led numerous initiatives to support families impacted by trauma, including starting the first restorative justice program in the Dallas Metroplex and helping establish the first Children's Advocacy Center in Dallas. Dr. Jackson-Cook also collaborated on the nationally recognized Strengthening Families Program by Dr. Karol Kumpfer, which has been adopted in 50 states and 36 countries. This family-centered program is recognized by multiple agencies, including NIDA, OJJDP, and SAMSHA, as an exemplary research-based model. Dr. Jackson-Cook founded the first domestic violence shelter in Dallas, offering comprehensive social services and medical programs to help families heal and rebuild.

Dr. Jackson-Cook is committed to improving lives through counseling, social service leadership, and community-based programs. She is currently working toward Biofeedback Certification International Alliance credentials.

# Presenters



## Gerald Juhnke, EdD, LPC, NCC, MAC, ACS Professor, University of Texas at San Antonio

Dr. Gerald Juhnke is an American Counseling Association Fellow and Professor in UTSA's Department Counseling Department. He established his first independent practice in 1986 and provided counseling and clinical supervision services across a wide range of settings in three states. From 1992 to 2004, Juhnke was a Professor at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG), where he also directed the Nicholas A. Vacc Counseling Department Clinic. There he created and led the Substance Information Program, which assessed and counseled adjudicated college students presenting with Substance Use Disorders.

He is a former President of two American Counseling Association (ACA) divisions: the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling and the International Association for Addictions and Offender Counseling.

Dr. Juhnke has made significant contributions to counseling scholarship. He chaired the ACA's Council of Journal Editors, overseeing 16 journals and all ACA publications. He served as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Addictions and Offender Counseling and Associate Editor for the Journal of Counseling and Development (2012-2018). Juhnke authored 14 textbooks and published over authored over 100 refereed journal articles and assessment instruments, including the widely used Life Balance Inventory.

# Presenters



## Rachel King, MS, LPC, LCDC, NCC

Doctoral Student, University of Texas at San Antonio

Rachel King, LPC, LCDC, NCC is a Clinical Staff Manager and doctoral student in Counselor Education and Supervision at the University of Texas at San Antonio. She brings over a decade of experience in counseling, supervision, and program management, with a background in addiction treatment and clinical leadership. Rachel is passionate about counselor development, effective supervision, and advancing best practices in the counseling profession.



## Krystal Lazaro, MS, NCC

Doctoral Candidate, University of Texas at San Antonio

Krystal Lazaro is a licensed professional counselor associate and doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education and Supervision program at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Krystal grew up in California and attended the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology. After her undergraduate program, she pursued a career in education and taught 5th, 7th, and 11th-grade English in Texas and California.

After teaching, Krystal earned her master's at the University of Texas at San Antonio, where she earned a bilingual counseling certificate in Spanish.

Throughout her academic journey, Krystal has combined her value and commitment to social justice and advocacy to incorporate multiculturalism in counseling, research and supervision. Krystal's scholarship has focused on bilingual counseling and supervision and creative interventions in counseling and supervision.

# Presenters

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## Joss Leal, MS, LPC-Associate, NCC, CTP

Doctoral Student, University of Texas at San Antonio  
Supervised by Swathi Weaver, PhD, LPC-S

Abraham is a silence service veteran and doctoral student in Counselor Education and Supervision at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Abraham's professional and research interests live at the intersection of counseling, law, and neuroscience. Abraham embraces an interdisciplinary approach to enhancing the counseling profession's readiness to address complex clinical challenges and promote client wellness in forensic counseling and evaluation, neurofeedback, and crisis response. Valuing an approach grounded in empathy, support, and goal-directed leadership, Abraham actively mentors both undergraduate students exploring

mental health education and graduate-level students navigating professional identity development as future counselors. Across local, state, and national platforms, his presentations have illuminated the continued need for integrating forensic counseling into counselor education curricula, deepening understanding of moral injury in forensic contexts, refining the co-responder crisis response model, and tracing the rapid evolution of technology in forensic evaluation. Together, Abraham's efforts are aimed at strengthening counselors' ability to provide culturally responsive, evidence informed services with the goal of treatment efficacy across client populations.

# Presenters



## Kevin Milligan, PhD, LPC-S, NCC

Director of Behavioral Health Services, University of Incarnate Word

Dr. Kevin Milligan is a Licensed Professional Counselor - Supervisor in the state of Texas. Dr. Milligan graduated with his Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Texas at San Antonio. Dr. Milligan is certified in Cognitive Processing Therapy and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. He specializes in working with survivors of trauma, clients with PTSD, depression, anxiety, grief and loss, and crisis interventions. He also serves as an adjunct professor in graduate-level counseling programs and has supervised graduate-level practicum and internship students. His research interests include religion and spirituality in mental health and grief and loss. Dr. Milligan is married with three children and enjoys spending his free time with his family, going to the gym, and being involved in sports.



## Luz Varela Morales, LPC, NCC

Bilingual Mental Health Therapist, UT Health San Antonio

Luz Varela Morales, LPC, is a bilingual therapist with expertise in trauma-informed care across diverse settings, including immigration services and work with school-aged children. She integrates Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) into her practice, supporting clients with anxiety, depression, grief, self-esteem, and stress related to systemic barriers. Bicultural and committed to cultural humility, Luz creates spaces where clients feel understood, supported, and empowered to navigate life's challenges with resilience and growth.

# Presenters



## Elaine Oyama, MS, LPC-Associate, NCC

Doctoral Student, University of Texas at San Antonio  
Supervised by Megan Smith, PhD, LPC-S

Elaine Oyama is an LPC-Associate, NCC, and doctoral student at UT San Antonio. She is the owner of Blossom and Bloom Counseling, PLLC, and offers virtual counseling throughout Texas. Her previous professional experience includes serving as a human trafficking and child exploitation specialist and a crisis hotline counselor for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. As a member of the CAST research lab, Elaine has worked.



## Whitney Rich, MS, NCC

Doctoral Candidate, University of Texas at San Antonio

Whitney Rich, MA, NCC, is a Doctoral Candidate in the Counseling Education and Supervision at University of Texas at San Antonio. She is committed to advancing research and clinical practice that prioritizes underserved populations, with a current focus on law enforcement professionals. Her work emphasizes client-centered, client-driven counseling grounded in deep respect for each individual's lived experience. She values the integration of psychoeducation and neurobiological perspectives, recognizing their role in fostering insight, regulation, and sustainable healing.

Her clinical approach is relational and collaborative because she values building authentic therapeutic connections. She practices a stance of cultural humility and works to attend to the social, cultural, and systemic factors that shape each client's experience. Through both research and practice, Whitney seeks to contribute to accessible, evidence-informed care that honors the whole person while also addressing the unique challenges faced by high-stress and underserved populations.

# Presenters



## Seth Robinson, MS, LPC Associate, LCDC

Doctoral Student, University of Texas at San Antonio  
Supervised by Margaret Bellows, LPC-S

Seth Robinson, LPC Associate, LCDC, is currently pursuing his PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision at the University of Texas at San Antonio. He is interested in trauma-informed suicide prevention, crisis intervention, and wellness enhancement across the lifespan. He is particularly committed to researching and advocating for historically at-risk populations, including: a) older adults, b) survivors of complex trauma, c) substance use and addictions, and d) individuals engaging in self-directed violence.



## Servando Rodriguez Barajas, LPC

Doctoral Student, University of Texas at San Antonio

As a doctoral student in the Counseling, Education, and Supervision program at the University of Texas at San Antonio, I am committed to promoting accessible, culturally responsive mental health care for children, adolescents, and families. I provided services at the UT Health and Baylor College of Medicine as an LPC. I have worked with children, adolescents, adults, and parents from different backgrounds, including rural and underserved communities. I hold certifications in BTII Pediatric OCD Treatment, the Unified Protocol for Transdiagnostic Treatment of

Emotional Disorders for children and adolescents, Trauma-Focused CBT, and CBT. In my role as a counseling researcher, I am completing an internship at Baylor College of Medicine in a lab specializing in OCD and anxiety. My research focuses on parent-led interventions for anxiety in children and youth, OCD across U.S. and Latin American clinical samples, transitional services for autistic adolescents, and social determinants of health on anxiety and depression in young people. These experiences have fostered a bold commitment to bridge the gap between clinical-counseling practice and research. I believe that translating scientific knowledge into accessible treatments is a form of advocacy with the potential to create lasting and meaningful changes.

# Presenters

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## Monica Rodriguez-Delgado, PhD, LPC, RPT Assistant Professor of Practice, University of Texas at San Antonio

Mónica Rodríguez Delgado, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, RPT (she/ella) is a licensed professional counselor, counselor educator at the University of Texas at San Antonio, and a registered play therapist in Texas. Dr. Rodríguez Delgado has nine years of experience in private and community practice, providing counseling to diverse clients through individual, couples, play, activity, group, and family modalities. Her clinical work centers on serving marginalized and racialized communities in both English and Spanish. Her research

is grounded in political, decolonial, and liberatory frameworks aimed at challenging oppressive structures within counseling and academia. Her work is guided by her community, clients, students, mentors, and collaborators as an advocate and anti-oppressive counselor/researcher. Outside of her professional roles, she enjoys growing medicinal plants and creating teas, tinctures, and salves as a way of reconnecting with ancestral knowledge and inner wisdom.

# Presenters

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## Shawn L. Spurgeon, PhD, NCC, LPC-S, ACS Department Chair and Associate Professor, St. Mary's University

Dr. Shawn L. Spurgeon is an Associate Professor in the Department of Counseling and Human Services at St. Mary's University, where he currently serves as Chair. He received his Ph.D. in Counseling and Counselor Education in 2002 from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Dr. Spurgeon has served as a Counselor Educator for over 20 years. His research publications include articles on African American male development and Professor Counselor identity development, and he has completed over 100 presentations at national, regional, and state conferences. Dr. Spurgeon's service to the profession includes the

American Counseling Association's 2014 Ethics Revision Task Force and the ACA Ethics Committee; additionally, he is a Past-President of the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC) and the Southern Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors (SACES). Currently, he serves as the President-Elect-Elect for the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES). Dr. Spurgeon previously worked as a mental health counselor at a family services agency, in a private practice, and at a community mental health center. He is currently Licensed as a Professional Counselor in Tennessee (LPC-MHSP) and Texas (LPC-S).

# Presenters

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## Emma Tharp, MS, LPC Associate, BCN

Doctoral Student, University of Texas at San Antonio  
Supervised by Mark Jones, DMin, LPC-S, LMFT, BCN, QEEGD

Emma Tharp, MS, LPC-A, is a clinician board-certified in neurofeedback through the Biofeedback Certification International Alliance and a doctoral student in Counselor Education and Supervision at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Her clinical practice and research interests are grounded in a psychodynamic framework that emphasizes understanding how internal experience, relational patterns, and neurophysiological processes interact.

At the Well Mind Center, Emma works with adolescents and adults, specializing in the treatment of mood disorders and other complex stressors related to identity development, trauma, and personality difficulties. By integrating neurofeedback into a depth-psychology-oriented approach, she sees brain-based patterns as windows into the broader organization of the self, offering insight into how neurobiological and psychological processes co-construct experience. This allows her to support clients in refining emotional regulation and cognitive flexibility while also fostering deeper self-understanding.

Emma's research extends this integrative lens, drawing on self-psychology to examine how disruptions in self-structure emerge in counseling, supervision, and other professional contexts. Across both her clinical and scholarly work, Emma is committed to bridging neurophysiological and psychodynamic perspectives to promote more cohesive, meaningful changes for clients and counselors alike.

# Presenters

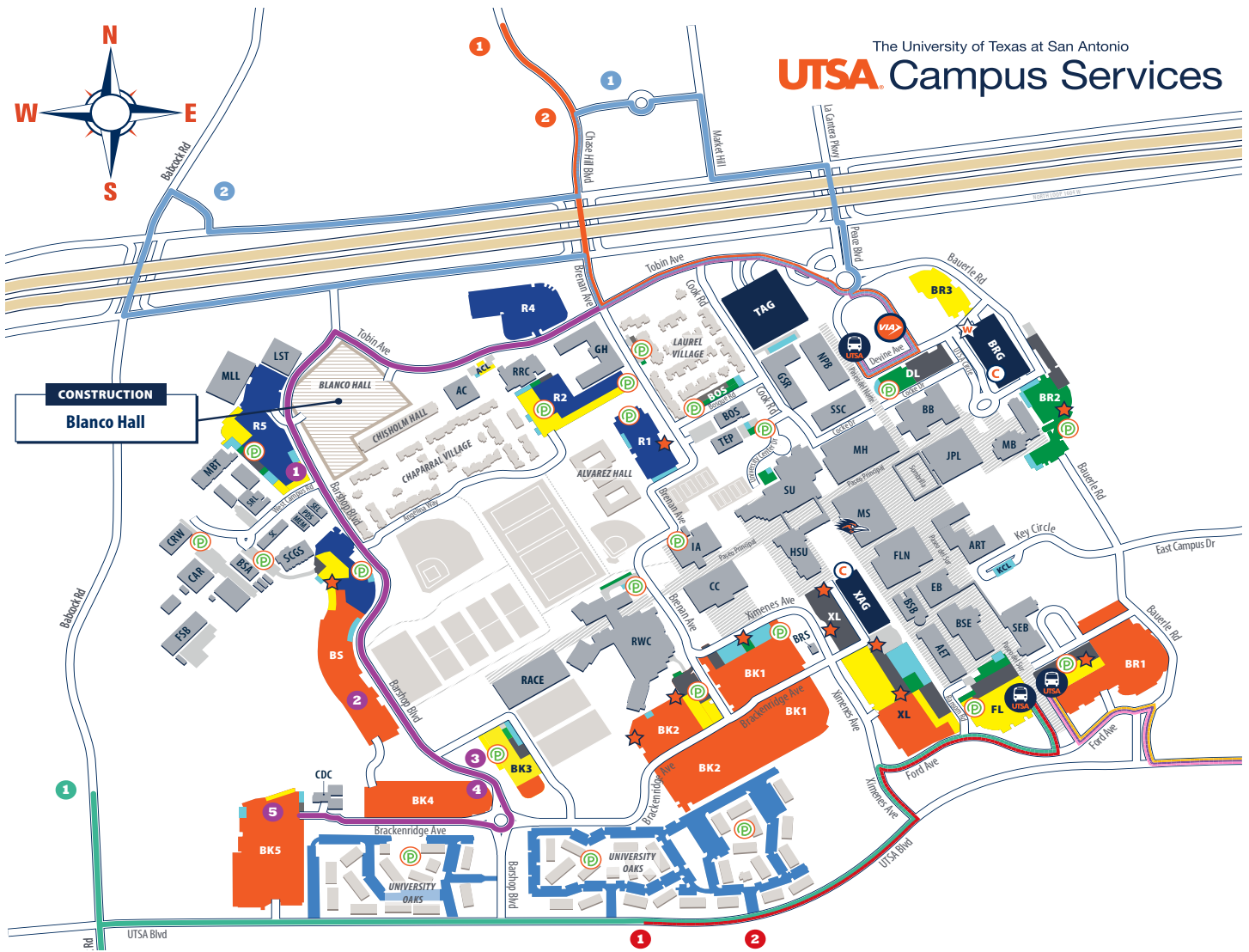


## Lorelei Voronin, LPC-S, ATR-BC

Doctoral Student, University of Texas at San Antonio

Lorelei Voronin is a Licensed Professional Counselor-Supervisor in Texas and a Board Certified Registered Art Therapist. She earned her Master of Science in Art Therapy from Florida State University and is currently pursuing a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Lorelei has extensive experience providing trauma-informed care in a variety of mental health settings, serving children, adolescents, and adults. She is trained in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) and integrates art therapy techniques to support clients in processing and healing from both recent and complex trauma. Her clinical work emphasizes the transformative power of creativity

in reducing trauma symptoms, fostering resilience, and promoting self-discovery through the art-making process. Her current research interests include art-based supervision, art-based research methodologies, trauma-informed care, and the use of art therapy to decrease trauma symptoms across the lifespan. She is also actively involved in the Counselors Against Sex Trafficking Research Lab, conducting qualitative interviews with survivors of sex trafficking and multidisciplinary team members who work with this population. Lorelei's work is driven by her passion for exploring the intersections of creativity, healing, and social justice.



<span style="color: orange;">■</span> COMMUTER C PARKING	<span style="color: orange;">★</span> MOTORCYCLE PARKING
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> RESIDENT H PARKING	<span style="color: orange;">☆</span> WELCOME CENTER
<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> RESIDENT U PARKING	<span style="color: orange;">⊙</span> GARAGE CASHIER STATION
<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> ADA/ACCESSIBLE PARKING	<span style="color: orange;">⊙</span> HOURLY PARKING - PARKMOBILE
<span style="color: green;">■</span> RESERVED PARKING	<span style="color: orange;">⊙</span> CAMPUS SERVICES (MS 1.01.52)
<span style="color: grey;">■</span> EMPLOYEE A PARKING	<span style="color: orange;">⊙</span> VIA BUS STOP
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> EMPLOYEE B PARKING	<span style="color: orange;">⊙</span> CONSTRUCTION ZONE
<span style="color: black;">■</span> GARAGES <i>(Garage Permit, Short-Term, &amp; Disabled Parking Only)</i>	

**MAIN CAMPUS BUILDINGS**

<b>AC</b>	Activity Center
<b>AET</b>	Applied Engineering and Technology
<b>ART</b>	Arts Building
<b>BOS</b>	Bosque Street Building
<b>BSB</b>	Biosciences Building
<b>BSE</b>	Biotechnology Sciences & Engineering
<b>BB</b>	Business Building
<b>BRS</b>	Tito Bradshaw Bicycle Repair Shop
<b>BSA</b>	Business Services Annex
<b>CAR</b>	Center for Archaeological Research
<b>CRW</b>	Central Receiving & Warehouse
<b>CDC</b>	Child Development Center
<b>CC</b>	Convocation Center
<b>EB</b>	Engineering Building

<b>FSB</b>	Facilities Services Building
<b>FLN</b>	Flawn Sciences Building
<b>GH</b>	Guadalupe Hall
<b>GSR</b>	Graduate School and Research Building
<b>HSU</b>	H-E-B Student Union
<b>IA</b>	Intercollegiate Athletics Building
<b>JPL</b>	John Peace Library
<b>LST</b>	Large-Scale Testing Laboratory
<b>MB</b>	Main Building
<b>MBT</b>	Margaret Batts Tobin Laboratories
<b>MEM</b>	MEMS Lab
<b>MH</b>	McKinney Humanities Building
<b>MLL</b>	Mesquite Living Laboratory
<b>MS</b>	Multidisciplinary Studies Building
<b>NPB</b>	North Paseo Building

<b>PDS</b>	Power & Dynamic Systems Lab
<b>RACE</b>	Roadrunner Athletic Center of Excellence
<b>RRC</b>	Roadrunner Café
<b>RWC</b>	Recreation Wellness Center
<b>SC</b>	Sculpture & Ceramics
<b>SCGS</b>	Sculpture & Ceramics Graduate Studio
<b>SEB</b>	Science & Engineering Building
<b>SEL</b>	Science & Engineering Lab
<b>SSC</b>	Student Success Center
<b>SU</b>	Student Union
<b>TB</b>	Transportation Building
<b>TEP</b>	Thermal Energy Plant

**MAIN CAMPUS PARKING**

<b>ACL</b>	Activity Center Lot
<b>BK1</b>	Brackenridge Avenue Lot 1
<b>BK2</b>	Brackenridge Avenue Lot 2
<b>BK3</b>	Brackenridge Avenue Lot 3
<b>BK4</b>	Brackenridge Avenue Lot 4
<b>BK5</b>	Brackenridge Avenue Lot 5
<b>BL</b>	Bosque Street Lot
<b>BR1</b>	Bauerle Road Lot 1
<b>BR2</b>	Bauerle Road Lot 2
<b>BR3</b>	Bauerle Road Lot 3
<b>BRG</b>	Bauerle Road Garage
<b>BS</b>	Barshop Boulevard Lot
<b>DL</b>	Devine Avenue Lot
<b>EC1</b>	East Campus Lot 1
<b>EC2</b>	East Campus Lot 2
<b>EC3</b>	East Campus Lot 3
<b>FL</b>	Ford Lot
<b>KCL</b>	Key Circle Lot
<b>R1</b>	Resident Lot 1
<b>R2</b>	Resident Lot 2
<b>R4</b>	Resident Lot 4
<b>R5</b>	Resident Lot 5
<b>TAG</b>	Tobin Avenue Garage
<b>XAG</b>	Ximenes Avenue Garage
<b>XL</b>	Ximenes Avenue Lot

### ROADRUNNER CAFÉ DINING

#### **Roadrunner Café**

Monday - Thursday: 7 a.m. - 10 p.m.  
Friday: 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Sunday: 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

#### **Rowdymart Express**

Monday - Thursday: 7 a.m. - 1 a.m.  
Friday: 7 a.m. - 10 p.m.  
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.  
Sunday: 10 a.m. - 12 a.m.

### JOHN PEACE LIBRARY

#### **Chick-fil-A**

Monday - Thursday: 7 a.m. - 11 p.m.  
Friday: 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Saturday: 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

#### **Starbucks**

Monday - Thursday: 6:30 a.m. - 10 p.m.  
Friday: 6:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Sunday: 12 p.m. - 7 p.m.

#### **Freshens Fresh Food Studio**

Monday - Thursday: 10:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
Friday: 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

#### **Subway**

Monday - Thursday: 10:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
Friday: 10:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Saturday: CLOSED  
Sunday: 12 p.m. - 7 p.m.

#### **Sushic**

Monday - Thursday: 10:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Friday: 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

#### **Dragon Bowlz**

Monday - Thursday: 10:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Friday: 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

#### **RowdyMart**

Monday - Thursday: 7 a.m. - 1 a.m.  
Friday: 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Sunday: 12 p.m. - 7 p.m.

### STUDENT UNION

#### **Panda Express**

Monday - Thursday: 10:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Friday: 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

#### **Freebirds**

Monday - Thursday: 10:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Friday: CLOSED

#### **RowdyMart**

Monday - Thursday: 7:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Friday: CLOSED

#### **Smoothie King**

Monday - Thursday: 7:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

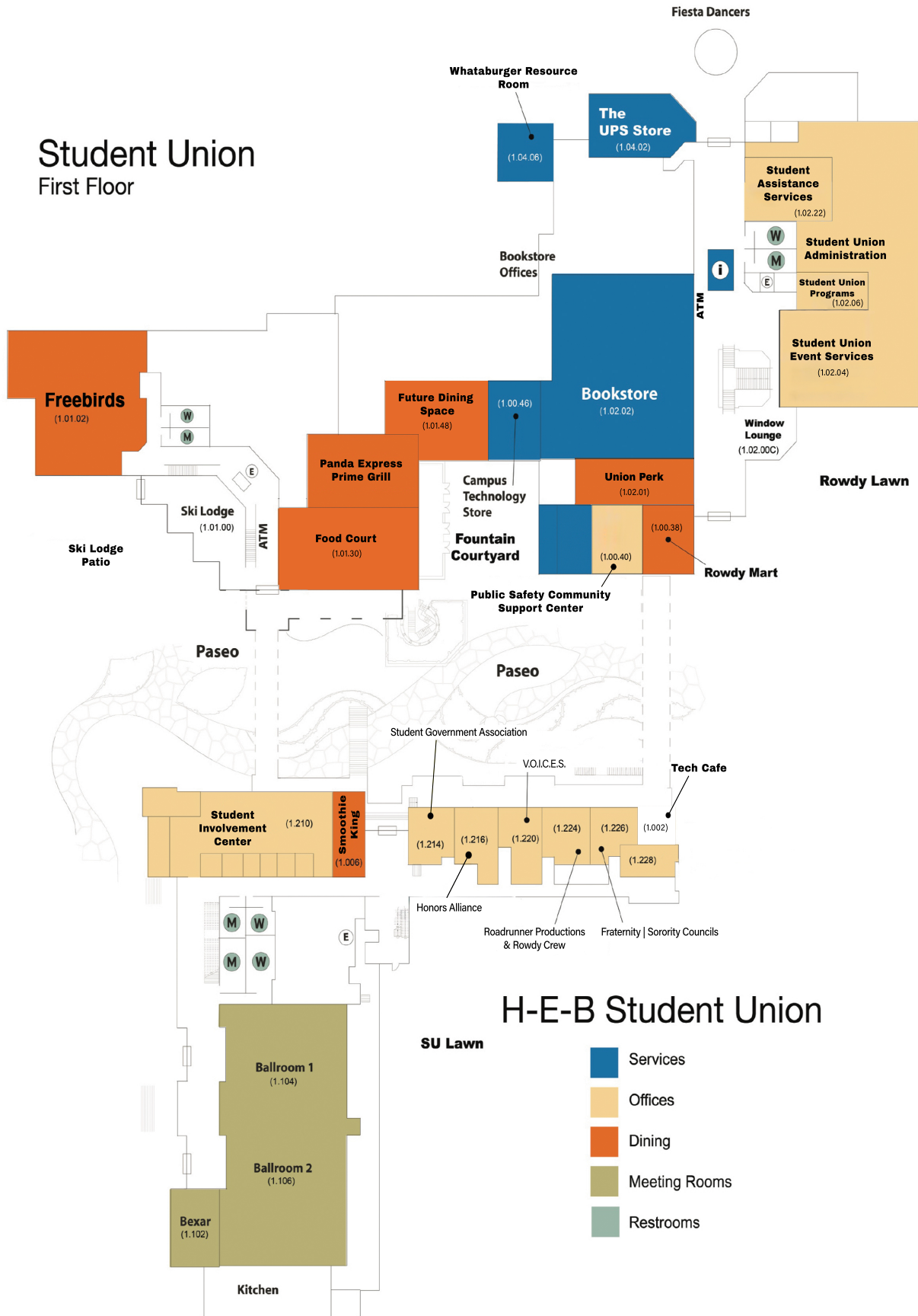
#### **Union Perk at the Rowdy Campus Store**

Monday - Thursday: 7 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.  
Friday: 7 a.m. - 3 p.m.

#### **The Den at Student Union**

Monday - Thursday: 7:30 a.m. - 2 a.m.  
Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 11 p.m.  
Saturday: 5 p.m. - 11 p.m.  
Sunday: 5 p.m. - 2 a.m.

# Student Union First Floor

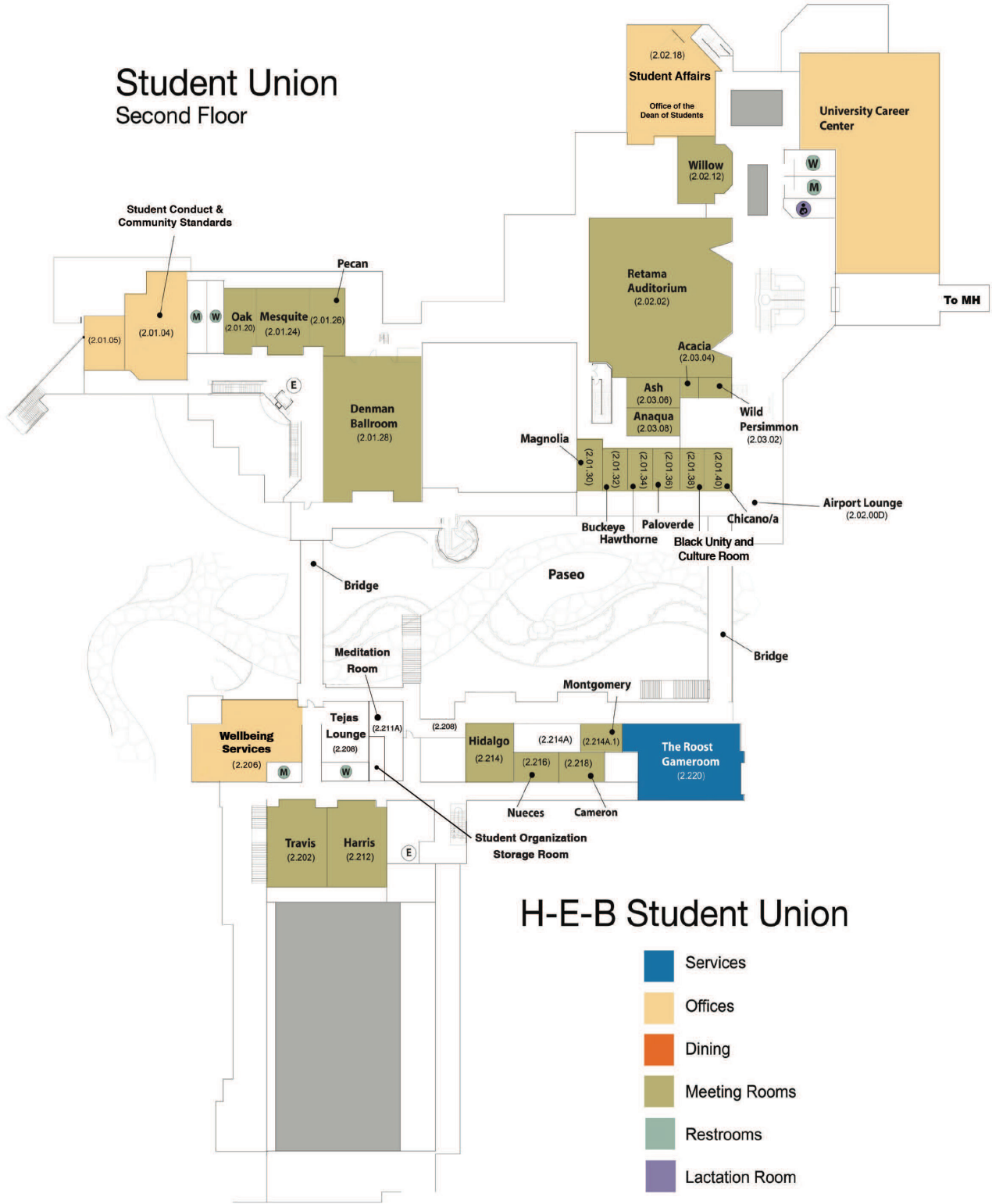


## H-E-B Student Union

SU Lawn

- Services
- Offices
- Dining
- Meeting Rooms
- Restrooms

# Student Union Second Floor



## H-E-B Student Union

- Services
- Offices
- Dining
- Meeting Rooms
- Restrooms
- Lactation Room



Thank You!