ANNOUNCEMENTS

· NCCA Membership Drive ends June 28th

· Advocacy Day at the NC Legislature was Tuesday, June 11 2019 7:30am

· 2020 Annual Conference February 26-28, 2020 in Charlotte, NC

Many thanks to our outgoing officers!

Have a Contribution for the Newsletter?
Email your submission to: nccounselingassociationweb@gmail.com

We’re on Social Media

Facebook: @NorthCarolinaCounselingAssociation
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Inside This Issue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President’s Message</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Branch News</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity and Advocacy</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division News</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019 Executive Officers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Shenika Jones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President-Elect: Mark Schwarze</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President-Elect-Elect: John Nance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past President: Allison Crowe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary: Loni Crumb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer: Kerri Legette McCullough</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member-at-Large: Government Relations: Megan Numbers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member-at-Large: Crystal Waters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2018-2019 Executive Officers

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From Reactive to Proactive through Advocacy in our Approach to Active Shooters in Schools
Contribution by Shenika Jones

It was Tuesday, April 30th before sunset while out in my grandmother’s flower garden when I received a text from a close friend and colleague. The text read, “UNCC is on lockdown.” I asked why, waited anxiously for the response, and then the next text stopped me in my tracks; “There’s an active shooter.”

In shock, my first thought was of my three years living on the campus of UNCC during my doctoral studies as a full time student and residence hall director. UNCC is not only my alma mater, it was my home; an active shooter had invaded a place I called home. As more texts and news notifications poured in, I started to hurt for the families and friends who were in such distress about the safety of loved ones. I thought of fellow counselor educators at UNCC and all of the students impacted by the shooter’s decision to walk into the Kennedy building and open fire.

As thoughts and questions begin to rush into my mind, one question in particular lingered: How I could help as a counselor?

On the Saturday before the tragedy at UNCC, your elected officers and division leaders of NCCA attended a post-conference board meeting. During the meeting,

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the need for an NCCA member-comprised crisis response team was proposed by president elect-elect, Dr. John Nance. The projected group of highly-competent counselors with training support from the Red Cross would aid our citizens of North Carolina in times of tragedy. Several past shootings were discussed, and the importance of having intra-community support was emphasized. We had no idea that days later UNCC would be added to the crowded list of horrific school shootings. The crisis response team would provide a supportive response after cases involving an active shooter. Although the team could impact many, the initiative would not answer the cry for help of the shooter or necessarily stop future shootings.

In counseling training programs, prevention and proactivity is the primary focus, followed by interventions and reactivity. Although the latter are important, the former can create less need for immediate responses to crisis. In the day to day grind of school counselors, we often are reactive because other demands interfere with the time and intentionality that it takes to truly monitor, assess, assist and refer to foster the mental health needs of all students. Even though there are unique characteristics of active shooters, school counselors who are busy with “other duties as assigned” do not have the time to observe and support students who fit the list of research-based characteristics of active shooters.

ASCA advocates for School counselors to have a caseload of 250 students to 1 counselor. In actuality, the caseload is double in most cases. Can school counselors recognize these patterns of students in distress and intervene accordingly if they are constantly spread thin in the school environment serving as leader of the school intervention team, testing coordinator, resource teacher, data manager, registrar, and other roles outside of their areas of expertise?

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President’s Message

From Reactive to Proactive through Advocacy in our Approach to Active Shooters in Schools

Page 3 of 3

The connection between comprehensive school counseling programs and preventing another occurrence of an active shooter hinges on the role of professional school counselors. It is time that we more actively advocate for the nationally recommended school counselor-to-student ratio in all schools. We must actively advocate for school-based mental health counselors in schools. Engage students in social and emotional learning focused curriculums in schools from kindergarten through graduation. As counselors, we know that we may not see the fruits of our labor instantaneously, but one less active shooter because of our proactive stance on mental health contributes to safer schools, cities, states, and the nation.

Like my grandmother’s flower garden, seeds are planted and nourished but even then, flowers don’t grow over night. In the case of combating the active shooter crisis, advocating for counselors to redirect their focus and commit to counseling all, especially those who need it most, is the water, sunlight, and favorable soil necessary for an increase of safety in America’s schools. Active advocacy efforts for school counselors operating in their realm of expertise and an increase of school-based clinical mental health counselors would result in better mental health in schools and communities. A commitment to such efforts would begin to mirror my grandmother’s favorite type of flowers in her garden, the perennials—as the impact of counselors on school safety continues to bloom year after year.

On behalf of NCCA, I would like to extend my sincere condolences to our members who are counselor educators, counseling alumni and current counseling students at UNCC.

Our thoughts are with the entire university community.

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Wrapping up the School Year

in Memory of UNCC 04/30/19
Carolina Counselor Sections

Branch News:
News about the North Carolina branch of the American Counseling Association

Campus Happenings:
News concerning student projects and student work in professional organizations such as local chapters of CSI and/or state, regional, and national counseling organizations

Diversity and Advocacy:
Discussion of issues related to diversity, multicultural competency, and advocacy; may address the helping professions directly or indirectly

Division News:
Any news related to NCCA division projects

Higher Education in NC:
Comments on the state of higher education in North Carolina and tips for effective teaching/learning.

Legislative News:
State and national news concerning enacted and proposed policy changes related to professional counselors in any setting

Member Spotlight:
NCCA members who deserve the spotlight! Please provide a photo of the nominee, a short summary of the member’s accomplishments, and contact information/photo of your nominee

Perspectives from the Field:
Ethical issues in counseling, counseling theory/practice, and/or reflections on work as a student, professional counselor, counselor supervisor, counselor educator
### Summer 2019 at a Glance

| Branch News: **NCCA Membership Drive**  
| “Each One, Reach One” Campaign | 9 |
| Diversity and Advocacy: **The Santa Dilemma**: Caregiver Considerations for Communicating with Children about the Holidays | 10 |
| Division News: **NCCDA Annual Transition Meeting** | 14 |
| Higher Education in North Carolina: **Modifying a Work-Study Program for College Career Intervention** | 15 |
| Perspectives From the Field: **Training Effective Counselors for Today: Telemental Health Counseling in Practice** | 19 |

https://nccounselingassociation.org/
Branch News

NCCA Membership Drive
“Each One, Reach One” Campaign

RENEW NOW (or before June 28) to receive the “Each One, Reach One” campaign benefits, and your membership will be extended through June 30, 2020.

For each new member who joins NCCA and indicates who referred them, the current member will be entered into a drawing (more recruits, more entries) to win a 5-year membership to NCCA. The deadline to participate in this offer is June 28, 2019.

All new and renewing members are required to join online. [https://ncca.wufoo.com/forms/moak471msszzk/](https://ncca.wufoo.com/forms/moak471msszzk/)

Current members must renew their membership before the June 28 deadline to be eligible to win. The drawing will be held on July 8th.

Additionally, as part of the encouragement for new members to join and current members to renew, four divisions are offering free membership to their division between April 24 and June 28. The four divisions:
- Association for Child & Adolescent Counseling—NC (ACACNC)
- NC Association for Adult Development and Aging (NCAADA)
- Association for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Issues in Counseling of NC (AGLBICNC)
- NC Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (NCAMCD)

Membership to NCCA and four divisions for $60.00 ($15.00 student & emeritus)

[https://nccounselingassociation.org/](https://nccounselingassociation.org/)
Summer brings warm weather and the onslaught of the Christmas creep, as the holiday season approaches earlier and earlier each year. The season brings discussion of one name, likely uttered by children and adults alike. This name is featured in commercials, animated television programming, music and is seemingly ever-present: Santa. This larger-than-life legend permeates the psyche of both children and adult caregivers. For some, mere mention of the name sparks joyous smiles and positive memories; yet, for others it conjures uncertainty, ostracization, and cultural confusion.

The description above sounds like something akin to the introduction of the antagonist in a horror movie and while it may not describe the experience of everyone, it can be challenging for some. I faced the Santa dilemma as the end of the year approached when my, then 2-year-old, son was enrolled in preschool. I started to notice that his teachers decorated the halls with Christmas trees, read to his class about Santa Claus, and pointedly linked students’ behavior to receiving gifts. My partner and I had brief discussions about how we wanted to explain
these religious and cultural traditions to our son; however, we were not the first to do so. Suddenly, we felt forced into following along and reinforcing the myth of Santa Claus. At that point, not only did we fear that it might be detrimental to contradict what he had already heard at school, but we also realized that endorsing an alternative narrative would be an uphill battle for all involved. Unfortunately, my experience is not uncommon.

It may be difficult to conceptualize any potential reasons to consider the implications of Santa for individuals who have experienced the tradition from a lens of privilege. Many families in the United States and in other parts of the world find comfort in the Santa character, typically portrayed as an older, omnipotent, white man who has the power to validate children’s behavior and cultural experiences by deeming them “naughty” or “nice”. Feelings of dissonance perpetuated by a dissemination of “not belonging” and “otherness” may arise for children and families whom do not identify as white, middle class Christians. Families with alternative beliefs, ideas, or identities may feel the need to “keep a secret” so their children will not face added adversity among their classmates or even some administrators in school settings. Cultural testimony, as explained in dominant cultures, may not prevail against the direct testimony of marginalized groups, especially if the direct testimony is not mainstream (Goldstein & Wooley, 2016). It is evident that the erasure of one’s beliefs in order to assimilate and aid children in facing less adversity is a very real phenomenon. A figure who is a “benign gift giver” in literature is inadvertently transformed into a perpetuator of

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socioeconomic privilege that often revolves around dominant race and creed.

What is the actual justification and reasoning for knowingly deceiving children about the existence of a benign gift-giver? It has been reported that children discover the truth about the legend of Santa Claus well before the age of 10, so why is it that parents believe children cannot prioritize what is important to them and their own development (Tait et al., 2018)? What is the systemic impact of this tradition? Researchers support this notion, stating:

There is a long enduring lay notion that children must be taught the difference between fiction and reality. Yet, cultural fictional characters such as Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy are widely promoted as real (Goldstein & Wooley, 2016, p113).

Some may say this is carried on for the sake of innocence and tradition, yet perhaps there are ways to be more mindful about the impact of these decisions on children. Caregivers have an important role in shaping their children’s understanding of their own culture and sense of personal identification (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). It should be noted that caregivers may also experience dissonance as they attempt to navigate how to orient their children toward the mainstream culture of the United States in a process called parental socialization (Calzada, Huang, Covas, Ramirez, & Brotman, 2016).

**Caregiver Considerations**

The authors suggest that caregivers and other members of the child’s support system thoughtfully consider the following questions:

1. What is your cultural identity?
2. How are your values, beliefs, and faith traditions influenced by your cultural identity?
3. How would you prefer to share your values, beliefs, and faith traditions with your child?
4. What influences, outside of your communication and modeling, is your child exposed to?

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5. What confirmatory messages might your child receive from these external influences?
6. What counter-messages might your child receive from these external influences?
7. How do you plan to manage the counter-messages that your child may receive?
8. How might these counter messages impact your child’s sense of pride in their cultural heritage?

It should be noted that the authors do not endorse once specific belief system or method of communicating with children; however, the intention of this piece is to encourage culturally informed and intentional socialization practices. After contemplating what messages your child may receive and what cultural values you wish to instill, it will be important that you put together a plan for proactively sending culturally supportive messages that hold-up regardless of your child’s environment while respecting the values of others.

References


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NCCDA Annual Transition Meeting

NCCDA (North Carolina Career Development Association) held their annual transition meeting for the executive board on Thursday, May 23, 2019. Four new board members were installed. The group conducted the executive board business meeting and brainstormed ideas for their annual conference. Special thanks to Sheena Jacobs, 2019-2020 Past President, for hosting the meeting at UNC-Chapel Hill. We’re looking forward to a great year ahead!

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Although a high percentage of college students are employed while taking classes, many struggle to make connections among academics, campus employment, and real world practical skills. Approximately 70%-80% of all college students are employed during their undergraduate education, and even students specifically at 4-year colleges under 24 years of age are employed at a rate of over 50% (Pike, Kuh, & Massa-McKinley, 2008; Riggert, Boyle, Petrosko, Ash, & Rude-Parkins, 2006). Despite high rates of college student employment and an increase of people earning college degrees, both employers seeking college graduates and college students considering future careers report lacking transferable skills and deficits in identifying real world competencies gained between the classroom and jobs (Sheets & Tillson, 2016). Over 90% of employers in one study reported valuing broad sets of transferable skills (e.g. critical thinking, ability to work in a team, effective communication, ethical decision-making, and desire for continued learning) over simply having a specific undergraduate major (Hart Research Associates, 2013). Additionally, university jobs have the potential to be a learning laboratories for skills that could increase future employability, especially since fewer than 55% of students identify the classroom as the place where primary transferable skills are learned (Griffin, 2016).

Aaron Galloway is in his final semester in the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC and is focusing in the Addictions Counseling Certificate. Aaron completed his clinical practicum and internship at a local college counseling center and enjoyed the opportunity to work with students as they made connections between their academic and career choices and their mental health.

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The University of Iowa collected data on employed college students to reveal that students struggle to identify practical skills learned in their academics and work study that are transferable to future career opportunities. In response to this, the university created Iowa GROW, a work study program designed to facilitate brief, structured conversations between university employers and student employees. With the intention of facilitating meaningful connections between academics and work, supervisors ask the following questions:

1. How is this job fitting in with your academics?
2. What are you learning here that’s helping you in school?
3. What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?
4. Can you give me a couple of examples of things you’ve learned here that you think you’ll use in your chosen profession?

Iowa GROW participants report increased development of transferable real world skills necessary for future employment and increased awareness of connections between academics and employment (Why We GROW, 2019). Specifically, students who participate in these structured conversations report developing more time management, communication, conflict negotiation, critical thinking, problem

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solving, and multicultural awareness skills when compared to non-participants. Thus, students participating in Iowa GROW experience increased development of the transferable skills that other students report lacking and that employers are seeking in graduate job applicants.

The current article proposes an adapted version of Iowa GROW as an active learning group intervention to be used in college counseling centers with students presenting with career issues. The Iowa GROW has seen great success within work study programs and has been adapted by numerous other colleges and universities. However, the program faces the limitation of supervisors having only limited time for these conversations, some supervisors being resistant to implementing change, and potential for supervisors to lack the skills to facilitate an optimally beneficial learning opportunity.

Thus, it is proposed that Iowa GROW be adapted for college counseling centers’ use as a group program, with the goals of increasing student career decision-making self-efficacy, decreasing career-related anxiety, improving job satisfaction, and exploring career-related values. Not only would this program help students develop awareness of valuable vocational skills and interests, it would provide a valuable opportunity to work on communication skills in the moment. The Iowa GROW program, simple yet effective, could be optimized by counselors with the person-centered active listening skills that can help students make connections among academics, current jobs, and future careers, all while identifying and reflecting underlying values. The program could be adapted for counseling groups by asking the following questions in addition to the standard four questions of the program:

1. What aspects of your job do you value the most?
2. How has your job contributed to your emotional well-being?
3. How, if any, has your job contributed to any stress or anxiety you may feel?

By utilizing these critical reflection questions in a group with the facilitation of trained college counselors, students have the opportunity to make connections between multiple domains in their life, identify real world practical skills that will transfer to future employment, learn from the successes of their peers, and realize underlying career-related values of which they may not have been aware. This has the potential to not only benefit students in their current positions by articulating the congruence between academics and work, but also will benefit students post-graduation and employers seeking qualified college graduates to fill their positions.

References
Why We GROW. (2019). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from https://vp.studentlife.uiowa.edu/priorities/grow/how-we-grow/

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As interest in and a reliance upon the internet and online connectivity grows, so also grows the need for online professional services. A common understanding of online connectivity is connecting people, resources, and services; anyone with internet access can obtain and use any number of online services: opening a bank account, checking your home security system, and even seeking professional services, such as legal counsel, medical advice, job opportunities, and mental health counseling (Swenson, Smothermon, Rosenblad, & Chalmers, 2016). Online services meet both vital needs and simple conveniences, and a significant advantage of using professional services in an online environment is the level of access it offers to rural populations who could not otherwise easily obtain these services (Ostrowski & Collins, 2016).

Online services provide many benefits, such as increased access from remote locations, the availability of a greater range of services, and the opportunity to select services from a global community. However, online services also come with several drawbacks, such as increased information security concerns, inconsistent legal and ethical regulations for providers, and challenges with using ever-changing technology. Offering professional services in an online environment provides opportunities for both providers and consumers, especially within the

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counseling profession; however, there are some distinct differences from traditional, face-to-face settings that require attention. For counselors, it is imperative that any online services provided, often called ‘telemental health’ or ‘telebehavioral’ counseling, meet ethical guidelines and legal obligations. Further, telemental health education and training must also increase to improve the availability and quality of these services.

To ensure a sufficient standard of care is provided, regulatory bodies, such as state licensing boards and professional associations, are currently developing protocols and training requirements for online services, including the businesses that house and manage these services. Unfortunately, as Ostrowski and Collins (2016) note, these policies are inconsistent, differ among states, and do not clearly define training requirements, if any guidelines are provided at all. With the growing popularity of online services, it is imperative that providers are knowledgeable in providing quality online services, as well as offering a secure environment for those who use these services. For example, many widely-used communication tools (browser-based email programs, messaging applications, and video chat software) are not compliant with HIPAA regulations for confidential healthcare services (Heath, 2015). Therefore, it is critical that consistent policies, procedures,
and training are employed to safeguard the increasing numbers of people seeking online services.

To meet this demand for telemental health services, the counseling profession is developing policies related to online counseling practice. The American Counseling Association (ACA) addresses the ethical implications of integrating technology into counseling through designating an entire section of their Code of Ethics (2014) to matters related to technology-assisted counselor education, supervision, and practice (see §H, pp. 17-18). However, while ethical codes provide guidance with ethical concerns that arise, they do not address practical knowledge acquisition nor the application of such knowledge.

Even with the increased popularity of online educational programs, focused training in telemental health counseling is inconsistently provided or limited in scope (Glueckauf et al., 2018). For example, the 2016 Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Counseling Programs (CACREP) standards include minimal training requirements for technology-related topics and nothing that specifically addresses providing online services. With the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) presenting an ethical mandate for counselors to obtain appropriate training prior to offering telemental health services, counselors must find this training elsewhere.

Fortunately, some states have endeavored to codify telemental health services that includes both a professional code of conduct and training requirements to offer online services (Van Wagenen, 2017). Several states have implemented laws that contain training standards, continuing education requirements, training topic requirements, informed consent practices, and renewal processes; unfortunately, most states do not provide this information (c.f., Lerman, Davidsen, Ozinal, dbrown202@liberty.edu
Thompson, Kim, & Tam, 2017). For states that do not codify telemental health services, they often provide general guidelines that include competency-related information; however, these guidelines rely upon existing counseling laws and do not attend to aspects unique to online counseling. In other words, there is not a clear definition of appropriate training for telemental health counseling, nor are there clear guidelines for appropriate practice standards.

Swenson et al. (2016) reports that many states view telemental health counseling “to simply be another modality of professional practice…with the assumption and intention that practitioners are held to the same ethical standards whether they are practicing online or in person” (p. 310). We contend that while some elements of counseling practice are similar within online and traditional counseling settings, there are also significant differences that must be addressed to provide effective telemental health services that meet ethical guidelines and legal obligations. Just as states are developing regulations for telemental health services, counselor education training programs must also infuse telemental health into counseling pedagogy. Further, professional counselors must ensure they have obtained sufficient training to offer telemental health counseling, coupled with a careful review of state laws related to telemental health services to confirm they are providing a sufficient standard of care to their clients.

References

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Thanks for Reading!

Do you have a contribution for the Carolina Counselor?

Would you like to discuss a potential idea for this newsletter?

email Nicole Stargell at nccounselingassociationweb@gmail.com

Like us next time you log into Facebook!

www.facebook.com/North Carolina Counseling Association
The fundamental purposes of the North Carolina Counseling Association shall be:

- To provide a united organization though which all persons engaged or interested in any phase of the counseling profession can exchange ideas, seek solutions to common problems, and stimulate their professional growth.
- To promote professional standards and advocacy for the counseling profession.
- To promote high standards of professional conduct among counselors.
- To promote the acceptance and value of individual differences and the well-being of all individuals.
- To conduct professional, educational, and scientific meetings and conferences for counselors.
- To encourage scientific research and creative activity in the field of counseling.
- To become an effective voice for professional counseling by disseminating information on, and promoting, legislation affecting counseling.
- To encourage and support the divisions and chapters.

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The North Carolina Counseling Association represents diverse interests of its membership through an Executive Council, geographically located members, specialty organizations, and committees.