



WEDNESDAY | MAY 18

9:00 - 10:00am

Registration

10:00 - 12:00pm

Keynote: **Beyond Kale and Pedicures: What works to manage compassion fatigue and secondary trauma?** — *Francoise Mathieu**, M.ED., CCC. RP. Co-Executive Director, TEND ■ ▲

2015 marked the 20th anniversary of the publication of Charles Figley's pioneering book "Compassion Fatigue", which explored the potentially negative impact of trauma exposure on helping professionals. Since then, the field of Compassion Fatigue (CF) and Secondary Trauma (STS) has grown exponentially, and new research has emerged suggesting effective ways for therapists and other helping professionals to sustain and protect themselves. New findings suggest that in order to reduce compassion fatigue and secondary trauma, we need to adopt a multi-pronged approach - self care, hot baths and company picnics are simply not enough. Although helping professionals cannot be expected to fix an entire system, they do however remain responsible for their own well-being - it is an ethical responsibility, for themselves, their clients and the community in which they live. This keynote will explore where we are at, and what has been found to work, for organizations, professionals and for us as individual helpers.

12:00 - 1:00pm

Lunch

1:00 - 2:30pm

Breakout Sessions

Building and Supporting a Resilient Team: Key tools for the high stress, high trauma exposed workplace — *Francoise Mathieu** ■ ▲

Compassion fatigue and secondary trauma are now fairly well understood consequences of working in high stress, high trauma exposed settings. New research suggests that self care alone is not sufficient in ensuring that our staff remain healthy and engaged and able to deliver ethical, compassionate care. What can we, as managers and supervisors, do to best support them given the realities of our limited resources? This workshop will present an overview of the most up to date evidence-based practices to support managers and supervisors in fostering resilience in their teams."

Nebraska Responds to Human Trafficking — *Stephen Patrick O'Meara & Alicia Webber** ▲

This session will outline the current efforts in Nebraska to combat human trafficking. Current Nebraska research will be shared, along with the Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force's goals, response system, and collaboration with community partners. Participants will be able to gain basic information on the definition of human trafficking, recognizing it in the youth they serve, and the promising practices around response.

Youth with Illegal Sexual Behavior — *Sheryl Overby** ■ ▲

Approximately one third of all sexual assaults are done by youth under the age of 18. Roughly 9% of these youth will go on to have more sexual offenses but more often, they will commit other crimes such as shoplifting, drug use or non-sexual assaults. We will explore what causes sexual behaviors, what prevents re-offending behavior and the role of reparation projects and clarification sessions in treatment.

Addressing the Needs of Youth with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities in the Juvenile Justice System — *Tricia Kingsley** ■ ▲

The identification and treatment of youth with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities in the juvenile justice system can prove to be a very difficult process. This session will provide an overview of assessing youth with suspected Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities; accessing appropriate community and educational services; recognizing the difference between rehabilitation and habilitation services; and the critical role of family engagement in the success of this unique population of youth.

Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center (YRTC) - Kearney Facility Tour

Attendee's will have the opportunity to participate in a youth guided tour of the YRTC Kearney facility. The tour will provide an overview of the programs, services, and daily structure provided to NE youth at the facility. Space is limited to the first 25 people. Interested attendees must sign up at the NJJA registration desk by noon.

2:30 - 3:00pm

Break

3:00 - 4:30pm

Breakout Sessions

All sessions are approved for Continuing Legal Education (CLEs) for attorneys.

■ These sessions are approved for LMHP CEUs.

▲ These sessions are approved for Criminogenic CEUs.

*For full biographies on presentation speakers, please refer to page 5.

3:00 - 4:30pm

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Social Media: Navigating the World of Digital Media and Teens — *Kevin O'Neil** ■ ▲

Social media is ever changing. Participants in this session will learn how teens are using social media and the different sites that are available. Strategies will be discussed in helping professionals work with youth and families on what is involved in being responsible with their social media presence.

The Application of ICWA in Nebraska's Juvenile Justice System — *Robert McEwen**

This presentation will provide a thorough overview of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in Nebraska. The presentation will provide a basic overview of major provisions of the ICWA, the new BIA guidelines, and will focus on how the new guidelines impact Nebraska's juvenile justice system.

Getting Out of the "Kitchen Sink": Effective Interventions for Low Risk Youth — *Amoreena Brady & Alicia Henderson** ■ ▲

This session will explore evidence-based practices for youth who are low risk. Optimal change is achieved by matching the level of supervision to the youth's risk and need. Failure to do so has been proven to cause harm. We will explore ways in which the appropriate level of interventions can be identified and achieved resulting in the best outcomes for the youth we serve.

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8:00 - 9:00am

Registration

9:00 - 10:15am

Leading the Way: Young Advocates Share Strategies for Juvenile Justice Reform — *Starcia Ague** & *Nebraska Young Adults* ▲

Engaging youth as not only advisors, but as leaders, is essential to juvenile justice reform efforts. This session will feature a panel of young leaders who will share their experiences and provide advice to organizations and advocates on how to cultivate and support young leaders in reform efforts.

10:15 - 10:30am

Break

10:30 - 11:45am

Breakout Sessions**In their own words: Youth Perspectives on Juvenile Justice Policy and Practice in Nebraska and the Nation** — *Starcia Ague** & *Nebraska Young Adults* ▲

Nebraska has long been ahead of the curve on utilizing youth with system experience to shape practice and policy. This session will explore strategies utilized on a national level to utilize youth voice to enhance system outcomes, listen to Nebraska youth reflect on their experiences engaging in Nebraska's recent reform efforts, and introduce authentic suggestions for continued development of Nebraska Juvenile Justice system that's responsive to the needs of the youth it serves. This session will focus on tools for young adults, but will be helpful to professionals, as well. This session will provide opportunities for participants to interact, participate and practice skills to impact their daily work.

Truancy, Absenteeism and Related Student Discipline Issues — *Karen Haase** ▲

Students who are court-involved often struggle with being habitually absent from school for a variety of reasons. Both state mandatory attendance laws and federal special education and disability laws speak to how schools can and should respond to student absenteeism. Karen Haase, an attorney who focuses her practice on representing Nebraska school districts and educational entities, will address these issues which juvenile justice advocates can use to better represent their clients.

10:30 - 11:45am

Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice: Clarifying roles for optimal youth and family collaboration — *Lindy Bryceson & Kari Rumbaugh* * ▲

As implementation of Juvenile Justice Reform continues in Nebraska, one of the key areas of focus is clarifying the distinct roles of juvenile justice and child welfare. These roles are very different, but must be united to maximize the services and support provided to youth in order to ensure success. Additionally, youth may require supports from both systems simultaneously which reinforces the need for collaboration. This session will discuss the different roles of juvenile justice and child welfare, as well as how collaboration is essential for probation officers and child welfare workers who must work together to develop plans that ensure youth achieve success in Nebraska

Toward Equity for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) and Gender Non-Conforming (GNC) Youth in Nebraska’s Juvenile Justice System — *Christina Gilbert* * ▲

Many juvenile justice systems don’t know how many young people in their system identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or gender-nonconforming (LGBT/GNC), and often lack appropriate services and placements that meet the unique needs of LGBT/GNC youth. Learn more about new national data that found 20% of young people in detention identify as LGBT/GNC. Juvenile justice systems can take several steps to ensure that these youth are treated fairly and with respect. This workshop will provide an overview of issues that lead to this disproportionate representation and of some common experiences of LGBT/GNC youth in the juvenile justice system. Participants will learn how data collection practices, staff training, and anti-discrimination policies can help build an equitable juvenile justice system for LGBT/GNC youth.

12:00 - 1:15pm

Lunch | Awards

1:30 - 2:45pm

Breakout Sessions

Guardian Rights and Surrogate Parents — *Karen Haase* * ▲

Often students who are court-involved do not have an adult in their lives to serve in the traditional role of a parent. However, both state and federal law presume that a student will have a “parent” and these laws give certain rights to these “parents.” Karen Haase, an attorney who focuses her practice on representing Nebraska school districts and educational entities, will explore the options for schools and advocates in addressing who is the “parent” in these situations and how to comply with the law while protecting the student’s best interests.

Same Team, Different Roles: How to achieve best outcomes — *Christina Gilbert & Christine Henningsen* * ▲

This session will explore the different roles of defense counsel, system stakeholders, and the family. The aim is to understand our separate roles and learn constructive ways to work together and overcome potential sources of tension. When parties understand each other’s roles and needs, a collaborative effort can lead to best outcomes for the youth we serve. The session will also explore ways we can help keep a youth on the right track at case closure.

Foster Care 101 — *Refer to page 5 for panel speakers* * ▲

This session is intended to provide participants with basic knowledge regarding foster care and kinship care. We will discuss specific information regarding the process to become a licensed foster parent as well as locating kin for children and youth. Facilitators will provide insight into agencies’ process in locating the best possible placement match for a child or youth and will explain private agency roles in the placement and support to children/youth and foster parents.

We’re all just making it up – Strategies for Youth Engagement — *Youth Rehabilitation & Treatment Center-Geneva Improv Group* ■ ▲

Led by young women currently residing at YRTC-Geneva, this workshop will utilize improv scenarios to illustrate strategies, skills, and solutions to developing dynamic relations between young people and professionals. Participants can expect to laugh, think, and interact, while gaining tangible skills to help in their daily work to support young adults.

2:45 - 3:00pm

Break

3:00 - 4:15pm

Breakout Sessions

Gang Prevention and Intervention Strategies/Impact One — *Refer to page 5 for panel speakers* * ■ ▲

This session will outline the various strategies and interventions that Impact One Community Connection, Inc. has utilized in addressing gang issues within North and South Omaha. The creation of a transformational relationship with youth allows “coaches”, who themselves have struggled in the past, instill hope through mentoring, education, spiritual development and job skills. Impact One Coaches will share their experiences and provide participants with effective approaches to working with gang involved youth and families.

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THURSDAY | MAY 19

3:00 - 4:15pm

Immigration Options for Child Victims — Virginia Maynes & Gretchen McGill* ▲

Ms. Maynes and Ms. McGill will be presenting materials on immigration relief that is available to undocumented children and their families that may be involved in the juvenile justice or child welfare system. Their presentation will focus on Special Immigrant Juvenile status, which is available to abused, neglected or abandoned children. The presentation will give an overview so that social service providers, case workers, GALs and anyone working with these populations will be able to properly refer children and families that may be eligible for immigration relief.

The Spirit of MI in Leadership — Brenda Jennings & Julie Kindler* ▲

86% of employees blame lack of collaboration and ineffective communication on work failures, yet only 2% of professionals have had formal training on how to effectively communicate. In this session, you will learn how to incorporate the spirit of Motivational Interviewing as a leader, obtain SAFE leadership practices, and create a workable leadership success plan.

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4:30 - 6:30pm

Networking Reception

FRIDAY | MAY 20

8:00 - 8:30am

Registration

8:30 - 10:00am

Breakout Sessions

Engaging Latino Families: Program Models and Emerging Practices for Success — Melissa Mayo* ■ ▲

Immigrant Latino families often face unique challenges in being actively engaged in their children’s lives. Learn more about these barriers as well as strengths-based, culturally focused, program models being used to address these barriers in the Pathways to Success program at Latino Center of the Midlands in Omaha, Nebraska. These models include the evidence-based Joven Noble/ “Noble Youth” program, emerging family strengthening models, and school-based truancy prevention and re-engagement efforts.

From Tragedy to Advocacy — Xavier McElrath-Bey* ▲

Stories about children who have been accused of serious crimes typically focus exclusively on what they are believed to have done; that which is often untold about youth offenders can yield invaluable insights into the causes of early poor decisions and mistakes, as well as children’s unique capacity for positive change. Listen to the stories of formerly incarcerated youth and their efforts to reform the justice system for all children.

Youth Behavioral Health Needs: Building Local, Evidence-based Responses — Refer to page 5 for panel speakers* ■ ▲

Many youth and their families are struggling with diagnosed or undiagnosed behavioral health issues across Nebraska. Research tells us that youth and families are better served in their communities where they can be surrounded by formal and informal support systems. This session will provide participants with information on Nebraska’s Behavioral Health Regions and new collaborations with the Office of Probation Administration and communities across the state that are leading to enhanced local wraparound and crisis response services to meet the needs of youth and families in the system.

Leading in Real Colors: Coaching Others to Achieve — Brenda Jennings & Julie Kindler*

Take your agency’s’ respective personality assessment to another level to create an environment that builds on individual strengths and enhances effective communication. We all desire to be the most effective leader possible and understanding others strengths and how to effectively communicate is the key! This workshop will assist in identifying individual strengths and create an environment based on applying Real Colors® and similar personality assessment concepts to effectively communicate, coach and mentor your staff in reaching their full potential.

10:00 - 10:15am

Break

10:15 - 11:45am

Closing Keynote

No Child is Born Bad — Xavier McElrath-Bey* ▲

Xavier McElrath-Bey, who believes that “no child is born bad”, will pull from his traumatic past, his childhood mistakes, and his unique insights to deliver an inspirational keynote and call to action.

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Françoise Mathieu (Keynote Speaker)



Founder of Compassion Fatigue Solutions, and a sought-after speaker and educator in Canada, the U.S. and around the world. With over 20 years of work in the field of mental health, she brings with her extensive experience as a crisis counselor, and nearly a decade of working with Health Canada's CFMAP (Canadian Forces Member Assistance Program). Françoise is now Co-Executive Director of TEND, a joint venture with Dr. Pat Fisher and divides her time between public speaking engagements and working with organizations looking to train their teams about burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, high stress workplaces, self care and helper wellness.

Françoise is one of the leaders of Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma education in Canada. Since 2001, she has given hundreds of seminars on compassion fatigue and self care across the country to over 50,000 helping professionals in the fields of health care, child welfare, the criminal justice sector, social and human services, emergency response, armed forces, education, addiction treatment and the Immigration and Refugee Board.

She is the author of *The Compassion Fatigue Workbook*, which was published by Routledge in 2012 as well as the author of several feature articles.

Françoise is also the chair of the CARE4YOU Conference, a popular event which brings together leaders in the field, front line workers and compassion fatigue educators for two days of learning, connection and refueling. This event is held in June every year.

Stephen Patrick O'Meara

is a graduate of the Creighton University School of Law ("J. D."), and has been practicing law for 43 years. He also has graduate study in social work (University of Iowa) and public administration (Drake University) (no degrees), while serving as the Executive Assistant to the Commissioner of the (then) Iowa Department of Social Services. Stephen currently serves as an Assistant Nebraska Attorney General, the Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force (NHTTF) Coordinator, and the Child Protection Training Coordinator, authoring in October of 2015, the Report & Recommendations for the Establishment of the Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force, which the Nebraska Attorney General adopted, establishing the NHTTF on October 20, 2015.

Alicia Webber

is the Program Manager for The Salvation Army's Fight to End Trafficking (SAFE-T) Program. SAFE-T is a federally funded state-wide program that provides comprehensive case management to survivors of all forms of human trafficking in Nebraska. As such, Alicia is responsible, among other duties, to: develop a statewide comprehensive case management program available to persons in Nebraska victimized by sex or labor trafficking; manage a \$1.2 million, 3-year federal OVC grant across the State of Nebraska. Alicia is a provisionally licensed mental health practitioner in the State of Nebraska.

Sheryl Overby

Ms. Overby has a Master's Degree in Counseling and Guidance and is licensed as an independent mental health provider in Nebraska. She has worked for over 25 years specializing in the treatment of families impacted by sexual abuse, including childhood survivors, protective mothers and youth with problematic sexual behaviors. Since 1998 Sheryl has been with Lutheran Family Services' RSAFE Program and provides training for therapists and other providers. Currently, Sheryl conducts individual and family therapy in private practice at Woodhaven Counseling and has a website, sheryloverby.com where many articles and resources are available.

Tricia Kingsley

Tricia Kingsley MSW is the Program Specialist for Education with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Children and Family Services. Tricia's work in the child welfare system began 25 years ago providing therapy services to children and families impacted by abuse and neglect. Tricia stepped away from her work as a therapist to meet the needs of her children; two of which were diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum. Tricia soon discovered her love for advocacy and Special Education when she began her work as a Case Advocate at Disability Rights Nebraska. Tricia was able to combine her passion for Special Education and child welfare in her role as the Program Specialist for Education as she supports the Children and Family Services System on matters related to education and Developmental Disabilities.

Amoreena Brady

Amoreena Brady is the Case Management and Services Specialist in the Juvenile Service Division of the Office of Probation Administration for the State of Nebraska. She began serving in this capacity in 2013. Ms. Brady has an extensive history of probation experience in various state settings, systems, and has served a wide variety of probation populations. In 1996, Ms. Brady began her career with the Orange County Probation Department in California. While at the Orange County Probation Department, Ms. Brady worked as a juvenile probation officer. In her capacity, Ms. Brady worked in various institutional setting developing case reviews and release plans for several special population programs.

In Ms. Brady's current role, she is charged with coordinating statewide case management for juveniles in Nebraska. She is a trainer and curriculum developer for the Nebraska Probation Administration System, helping to educate new and existing probation officers regarding best practices in the fields of juvenile and criminal justice. In June of 1996, Ms. Brady earned her Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Chapman University, Orange, CA. In June 2014, Ms. Brady completed a certificate program and is a fellow of the Georgetown University Center for Juvenile Justice Reform.

Alicia Henderson

Chief Deputy County Attorney, Lancaster County

Kevin O'Neil

Technology Coordinator for Gretna Middle School

Robert McEwen

Robert McEwen received his undergraduate degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a law degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Before being hired by Appleseed in 2011, Robert clerked at Nebraska Appleseed for a year and half. Since joining Appleseed, Robert has managed the Foster Care Reform Legal Resource Center, which provides a variety of resources to assist frontline child welfare attorneys in addressing systemic issues in their individual cases. Robert has also co-authored two amici briefs before the Nebraska Court of Appeals and Supreme Court.

Jane Prine

Jane Prine is the Acting Executive Director and Director of Professional Development and Curriculum at Impact One. She is a licensed alcohol and drug counselor with over twenty-three years of experience working with youth and young adults in SA/MH treatment. She worked for ten years with the Nebraska Department of Corrections as a chemical dependency counselor and supervisor of SA treatment programs in various institutions. Jane has studied Criminal Justice Administration at Bellevue University and is seeking to further her studies in Masters in Counseling.

Starcia Ague (Keynote Speaker)



Is a Youth and Family Advocate Program Administrator with the Department of Social and Health Services at Juvenile Justice and Rehabilitation Administration. She is the first juvenile ever in the state of Washington to receive a pardon from the Governor—a story told in the documentary “Starcia”, which recently won a NW Regional Emmy. Starcia’s goal of empowering youth led her to obtain a degree in Criminal Justice from Washington State University in 2010. She now serves on the Governor’s Washington State Partnership Council for Juvenile Justice. She was the 2012 Champion for Change Award recipient from the MacArthur Foundation and won the Courage award for public service in 2013. Most recently she has been chosen as a 2014 SOROS Justice Fellow by the Open Society Foundation and as Vice Chair to the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice representing Alaska, Oregon, Hawaii and Washington. November 2015 elected to ACLU Washington Board of Directors.

Karen Haase

Karen Haase is a principal in the Lincoln law firm KSB School Law where she practices exclusively in the area of education law. She frequently presents in-services to the students and staff and speaks to all manners of education groups.

Ms. Haase graduated from the University of Nebraska School of Law with highest distinction. She also obtained a Masters of Arts in Political Rhetoric from Kansas State University in 1991 and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Hastings College. Prior to practicing private practice, she spent two years as a law clerk to the Honorable C. Arlen Beam, a Circuit Judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

Ms. Haase has taught on the university level and has served as an adjunct instructor in the University of Nebraska at Omaha’s educational administration department. She is the author of several articles published in academic journals. Three of her articles have appeared in the NEBRASKA LAW REVIEW: one December, 2000, entitled Challenges to Regulating Students’ Exotic Body Piercing; another in 1997, entitled Mixed Metaphors; Model Civil Jury Instructions for Title VII Disparate Treatment Claims, and a third in 1995, entitled You Can Check Out Any Time You Like, but You Can Never Leave: Attorney Conflict of Interest and Imputed Disqualification under Nebraska’s New Bright Line Rule. Ms. Haase is a past president of The National Counsel of School Attorneys and the Nebraska Bar Association and is admitted to the U.S. District Court, District of Nebraska, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals and the Nebraska Supreme Court.

Lindy Bryceson

Lindy Bryceson is a Children and Family Services Field Operations Administrator for the Department of Health and Human Services. Lindy has been employed with the State of Nebraska for approximately 35 years. She began her career providing direct care to youth at the Nebraska Center for Children and Youth, (NCCY). Love and marriage created an opportunity for Lindy to pursue employment in Protective Services in the rural counties in southeast Nebraska. After being promoted to a supervisor, Lindy was very involved in the transition of youth involved in the correctional system to be transitioned to the Office of Juvenile Services. Some may affectionately recall this era referred to as “Badges and Birkenstocks”. Lindy’s career expanded when she accepted an administrator position, additional responsibilities in the metro areas of Lincoln and Omaha, involvement in the implementation and management of two Integrated Care Coordination Units (ICCU), involvement in privatization of case management in Nebraska and responsibility to coordinate efforts to return case management to the Department of Health and Human Services in the Southeast Service Area. In 2012, Lindy was promoted to be the Service Area Administrator for the Southeast Service Area and in 2014 she was promoted to be a Field Operations Administrator. Lindy has a compassion to involve family in the care of children involved in our systems and develop plans that meet the individual needs of the children and families we serve.

Kari Rumbaugh

has served as Assistant Deputy Administrator with the Administrative Office of Probation, Juvenile Division, since October 1, 2014. She began her Probation career as a juvenile probation officer for the Lancaster County Separate Juvenile Court in November, 2000. In 2006, she joined the Office of Probation Administration as Deputy Interstate Compact Administrator. Soon after, in 2007 she was asked to develop the Rural Improvement for Schooling and Education (RISE) Program in collaboration with AmeriCorps Nebraska as the Program Director.

Kari earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Family Science with a Minor in Psychology and Sociology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1998. She is a certified "Real Colors" facilitator and has trained nationally and for the Nebraska probation system since 2009.

Christina Gilbert

Christina Gilbert joined the National Juvenile Defender Center (NJDC) in 2012 to manage the Equity Project, a collaborative initiative of NJDC, Legal Services for Children, and the National Center for Lesbian Rights. The Equity Project works to enhance policies and practices related to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and ensure fair, equitable and dignified treatment of LGBT youth in delinquency systems. She is also the Campaign Manager for the Campaign Against Indiscriminate Juvenile Shackling (CAIJS) at NJDC. She holds a J.D. from Northeastern University School of Law and a B.A. in Social Thought and Political Economy from the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Christine Henningsen

Christine Henningsen is an attorney and director of Nebraska Youth Advocates, which strives to improve youth outcomes through enhanced training and support to juvenile defenders. Prior to that role she served as the staff attorney of the Nebraska Juvenile Justice Improvement Project, and practiced for five years in the Separate Juvenile Court of Douglas County as a Assistant Public Defender.

Foster Care 101 Speakers

Ashley Brown LCSW, KVC Program Director

Theresa Goley LMHP, KVC Program Director

Michelle Moline, LCSW, NE Children's Home Society Foster Care Director

Gang Prevention and Intervention Strategies / Impact One Speakers

Jane Prine, Acting Executive Director

George Devers, Street/School Outreach Coordinator

Margie Chavez, Street/School Outreach Specialist

Cynthia Stubblefield, School Outreach Specialist

Robin Wilkins, Administrative Assistant/School Outreach Specialist

Virginia Maynes

Virginia specializes in working with immigrant children and their families. She attended Brigham Young University, earning dual degrees in Political Science and American Studies. She then graduated cum laude from the law school at Washington University in St. Louis. While at Washington University, Virginia earned the Charles Trobman Memorial Award for her performance in Immigration Law. She previously interned for the U.S. immigration court in Kansas City as well as Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) in Washington, D.C. Virginia speaks Spanish, is licensed to practice law in Missouri and Nebraska, and a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA).

Gretchen McGill

Gretchen originally joined JFON in 2012 as a volunteer attorney. In her present position, she is responsible for the outreach and education of law enforcement agencies, social service providers, and others in the criminal justice system on best practices for working with immigrant victims of domestic violence. She also works with law enforcement agencies to develop curriculum and protocols for working with immigrant victims of crime who may qualify for the U-visa, T-Visa, and other non-immigrant status. Gretchen graduated magna cum laude from the University of South Carolina with a degree in Political Science and cum laude from the University of Minnesota Law School. She previously worked as a Sarpy County Deputy Attorney where she specialized in domestic violence cases. Gretchen is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and the Nebraska State Bar.

Brenda Jennings

After 12 years working as a probation officer inspiring not only her clients toward positive behavior change, but also her colleagues, Brenda formed her own company, Motivate 2 Communicate, LLC in 2012. She offers tailored certified trainings and curriculum development in evidence-based practices, risk/needs assessments, motivational interviewing, personality assessments, and leadership enhancement. She is a highly sought trainer and guest speaker amongst the criminal justice industry and contracts with several local and state government agencies nationwide to assist in the implementation of evidence-based practices and programming.

Brenda is currently an adjunct faculty member at her alma mater, Midland University in the Criminal Justice Department. She contracts with the University of Nebraska's Center for Justice Research in developing the Transformation Project as well as with the National Institute of Corrections in enhancing nationwide evidence-based practices. Additionally, Brenda is a certified MINT Motivational Interviewing trainer and Real Colors® trainer. She is a certified assessment trainer for Multi-Health Systems and holds multiple other training certifications as well.

Julie Kindler

Julie began her career in probation as a Community Based Intervention Officer for eight years prior to moving to Probation Administration as Program Development Manager. Julie oversees policy development, training curriculum development, evaluation of programming, cognitive programming and motivational interviewing for Nebraska State Probation. She is the State trainer for Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Level of Service/Case Management Inventory, Nebraska Adult Probation Risk and Needs Screening Instrument, Real Colors®, Lead for Motivational Interviewing Training Team and Group Facilitation. Julie has presented at Nebraska Juvenile Justice Association annual Conferences and at Heartland Juvenile Services Association Conferences. Last summer Julie presented an Intensive Training Session for the summer American Probation and Parole Association conference.

Melissa Mayo

Melissa Mayo joined Latino Center of the Midlands as Program and Evaluation Director on June 9, 2014. In this role, she leads the Pathways to Success (P2S) program which focuses on improving attendance and academics, providing youth engagement opportunities, and reducing the incidence of risky behaviors of youth at three metro target schools - South, Bryan and Bellevue West High schools. She also oversees the Joven Noble/ "Noble Youth" program, an evidence based rites of passage program for high school aged youth. In addition to programmatic responsibilities, Melissa also leads agency evaluation activities by building capacity for, implementing, and managing internal systems for conducting ongoing outcomes measurement and assessment.

Melissa has extensive experience in program management, community outreach and outcome based program evaluation in juvenile justice and mentoring fields. She has demonstrated a strong commitment to helping youth in South and North Omaha reach their educational, career, and personal goals. Prior to working at Latino Center of the Midlands, Melissa served as Vice President of Programming and Operations at Partnership 4 Kids; Assistant Program Coordinator of the juvenile services Tracker program at Heartland Family Service; and Educational Specialist at Pacesetter Academy.

A Nebraska native, Melissa received her Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and is pursuing a Master's degree in Public Administration both from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. She is a Class 4 graduate of the Nonprofit Executive Institute (NEI) through Nonprofit Association of the Midlands. Melissa holds a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) certification and over seven years of experience in this field. In addition to her professional accomplishments, Melissa serves on the board of the South YMCA, mentors four young ladies through the Partnership 4 Kids mentoring program, and is an avid fan of South High Packers basketball.

Youth Behavioral Health Needs: Building Local, Evidence-based Responses

Julie Scott, Office of Probation Administration

Micki Noah, Region 6

Renee Dozier, Region 5

Beth Baxter, Region 3

Xavier McElrath-Bey (Keynote Speaker)



Xavier McElrath-Bey is a national spokesperson that serves as the Youth Justice Advocate with the Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth: a national collaboration and clearinghouse that coordinates, develops and supports efforts to implement age-appropriate alternatives to the extreme sentencing of America's youth—with a focus to abolish "juvenile life without parole". Xavier is also a co-founder and coordinator of the Incarcerated Children's Advocacy Network (ICAN), which is a national network of formerly incarcerated youth who seek to humanize the justice system for all children.

When Xavier was 13 years old he was arrested, charged and later convicted to serve a 25 year sentence in prison for his involvement in a gang related first degree murder. After 13 years in prison he came out with a remorseful heart, a bachelor degree in Social Science from Roosevelt University and a mission to advocate for poor, disadvantaged and at-risk youth.

Soon after his release he earned a Master of Arts in Roosevelt University's Counseling and Human Services Program. Prior to his current position with CFSY he worked for Ceasefire as an outreach worker, as a street intervention specialist for Catholic Charities, as the Juvenile Justice Diversion Program Coordinator for Alternatives Inc., and as a Clinical Research Interviewer for Northwestern University's Juvenile Project—a longitudinal study which assessed the mental health needs and outcomes of formerly incarcerated youth.

Much of Xavier's advocacy efforts has been highlighted by various media sources and news outlets, such as New York Times, Chicago Tribune, PBS NewsHour, The Steve Wilkos Show, Huffington Post, MPR, Al Jazeera America, and many others. Xavier also delivered a powerful TEDx Talk at Northwestern University, titled "No Child is Born Bad", in which he shared about his childhood experiences of abuse, neglect, incarceration and the unique capacity for change that exists within all children—demonstrating that children should never be defined by their worse act.

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