

The top section of the cover features a photograph of green ferns. Overlaid on the left side of this image is the acronym "NCCA" in a large, light green, serif font.

NCCA

Carolina Counselor

Fall 2024

Official Newsletter of the North Carolina
Counseling Association

Carolina Counselor



Official Newsletter of the NCCA

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to our 2024-2025
NCCA Officers

Counseling Compact in
Progress

Have a Contribution for the Newsletter?

Email your submission to:
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2024-2025 Executive Officers

President: Kerri Legette
McCullough

President-Elect: Shanita Brown

President-Elect-Elect: Ashleigh Glover

Past President: Andrea Barbian

Secretary: Allison Fears

Treasurer: TBA

Member-at-Large Government Relations: Angela Brooks-Livingston

Member-at-Large: Rolanda Mitchell

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Published October 2024

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Thanks for Reading!

Please submit to the *Carolina Counselor* when you have something to share with professional counselors in North Carolina.

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 the department, university, community, and/or 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/counseling

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:

Professional and ethical issues in counseling, counseling theory/practice, and/or reflections on work as a student, professional counselor, counselor supervisor, and/or counselor educator

NCCA membership is required to submit articles.

Branch News

Welcome to Our 2024-2025 NCCA Officers!

2024-2025 Executive Officers

President:	Kerri Legette McCullough
President-Elect:	Shanita Brown
President-Elect-Elect:	Ashleigh Glover
Past President:	Andrea Barbian
Secretary:	Allison Fears
Treasurer:	TBA
Member-at-Large Government Relations:	Angela Brooks-Livingston
Member-at-Large:	Rolanda Mitchell

Branch News

A Message From the President

By Kerri McCullough

Dear Members of the North Carolina Counseling Association,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 year! As your newly elected president, it is my honor and privilege to address such a dedicated group of professionals who continue to make significant impacts in the field of counseling. Each of you plays a crucial role in enriching the lives of the individuals and communities we serve.

This year, the executive board is committed to advancing our association through robust advocacy, steadfast transparency, and unwavering support for our members. We recognize the unique challenges faced by counselors in North Carolina and are dedicated to advocating for policies that protect our profession and promote the well-being of our clients.



Transparency is at the heart of our operations. We strive to keep you fully informed and engaged with the ongoing developments within our association and the broader counseling community. This commitment ensures that every member's voice is heard and valued in shaping the future of our association.

Moreover, we are focused on bolstering support for our members, providing you with the resources, training, and guidance needed to thrive in your careers. We understand that your success is our community's success.

kclegette@gmail.com

Branch News

A Message From the President

By Kerri McCullough

Looking ahead, I encourage each of you to mark your calendars for the 2025 Conference on February 27th - March 1st in Charlotte, North Carolina. The theme for this year's conference is Empowering Counselors: Nurturing Holistic Wellness through Trauma-Informed Care. This event promises to be a cornerstone for learning, networking, and professional growth. Register early to secure your participation in what promises to be an enriching experience filled with opportunities to engage with leaders in the field and to further our collective expertise and passion.

Let us move forward together with a renewed spirit of collaboration and commitment to our profession. Your involvement and contributions are essential as we tackle the challenges ahead and continue to advocate for the counseling profession.

Warm regards,

Dr. Kerri McCullough
2024 - 2025 President, North Carolina Counseling Association

Division News

ACAC NC Division News

By Amy Grybush

After a brief hiatus, the Board of ACAC NC has renewed their work on providing new opportunities for connection and growth within our division. We are excited to share a few of these efforts with you:

- Be on the lookout for our bi-annual newsletter beginning Fall 2024.
- Starting October 2024, we will begin providing an email news brief called the “Research Round-Up”. These periodic updates will provide synopses on recent and innovative research that may inform your practice. Reach out if you have suggestions for topics (acacnc23@gmail.com)!
- We are working on providing a webinar in November 2024 (CEUs included); more information to come!
- You can find us at our new webpage (ACAC NC), as well as on Instagram [@acac_nc](https://www.instagram.com/acac_nc) where we provide timely information and resources.

Amy L. Grybush, PhD, LCMHCA, NCC
Assistant Professor, Wake Forest University
President, ACAC NC 2023-2025



acacnc23@gmail.com

Division News

ACAC NC Division News

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- There will be an ACAC NC “Meet Up” at the 2025 North Carolina Counseling Association Annual Conference, February 27 - March 1, 2025 in Charlotte (more information to come).
- We are currently holding our membership drive and would love for you to join us!

As we embark on a new school year, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the vital role counselors play in the lives of young people. Your dedication to guiding, supporting, and advocating for them, both inside and outside of schools, is deeply appreciated.

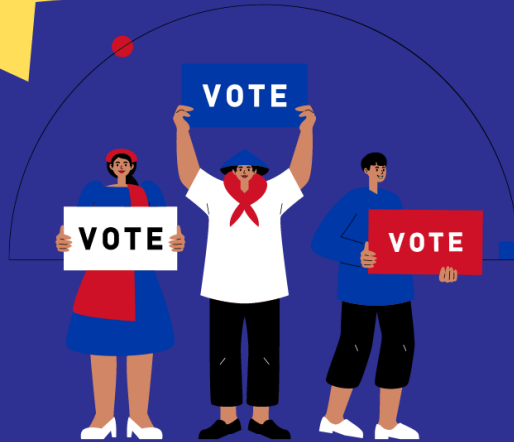
We look forward to connecting with you over the next months!

Legislative News

**DEADLINE FOR
VOTER
REGISTRATION
OCTOBER 11**

INCCA

**VOTER INFORMATION FOR
COUNSELORS AND CLIENTS**



Absentee ballots
mail out
September 6
Early voting
starts
October 17

Voter ID is required

North Carolina driver's license
Non-operator ID
U.S. Passport or U.S. Passport card
North Carolina voter photo ID card issued by a county board of elections
College or university student ID approved by the State Board of Elections
State or local government or charter school employee ID approved by the State Board of Elections



**SCAN FOR VOTER
RESOURCES**



A.7.A. ADVOCACY

WHEN APPROPRIATE, COUNSELORS ADVOCATE AT INDIVIDUAL, GROUP, INSTITUTIONAL, AND SOCIETAL LEVELS TO ADDRESS POTENTIAL BARRIERS AND OBSTACLES THAT INHIBIT ACCESS AND/OR THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF CLIENTS.

Perspectives From the Field

Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, and Vicarious Trauma: Wellness Suggestions for Professional Counselors

By Oluyemi Stephens and Nicole Stargell

Burnout, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma are job hazards that professional counselors might face across their careers. Burnout can be experienced by professionals in any type of employment, whereas compassion fatigue is specifically associated with helping professions (Abramson, 2022; De Hert, 2020; Merriman, 2015a). Vicarious trauma is a reaction associated with helping professionals exposed to traumatic client experiences (World Health Organization [WHO], 2013). Wellness suggestions for counselor trainees, counselor educators, professional counselors, and supervisors are provided.

Burnout is characterized as exhaustion, mental distancing, and negativity regarding one's job due to ineffective management of chronic workplace stress (WHO, 2024). Burnout occurs in all lines of work and can be experienced by any professional (Abramson, 2022; De Hert, 2020). However, some occupations, such as educators and health and allied professionals, are more predisposed to burnout (Abramson, 2022). Commonly, health workers are confronted with issues such as high workload, inadequate staffing, time pressure, poor work environment, and highly demanding tasks (De Hert, 2022). These work factors significantly burden healthcare workers' capacity to cope with the professional demands.

Oluyemi Stephens is a final-year Graduate Student of Clinical Mental Health Counseling at The University of North Carolina at Pembroke. He is passionate about the total wellbeing of a person, especially counseling professionals.



Perspectives From the Field

Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, and Vicarious Trauma: Wellness Suggestions for Professional Counselors

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Burnout is associated with mental health problems such as depression, insomnia, anxiety, substance use, and strained interpersonal relationships (Kalmoe et al., 2019; Martinez et al., 2020). Similarly, burnout and the associated mental health challenges are associated with medical conditions such as cardiovascular diseases, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, and musculoskeletal pain (Salvagioni et al., 2017). Additionally, burnout can impair clinical decision-making and lead to reduced productivity and reduced care of clients and patients (Rotenstein et al., 2018).

Compassion fatigue is an extension of burnout that is specifically related to exposure to suffering (Merriman, 2015a). It can be described as a state in which helping professionals experience physical, psychological, and emotional exhaustion, along with feelings of vulnerability, alienation, and disorientation (Thompson, et al., 2014). Practitioners are prone to compassion fatigue due to heavy caseloads, exposure to suffering, and a lack of self-care, supervision, and resources (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016). Compassion fatigue may erode one of the core elements of the helping profession: empathy for clients. Compassion fatigue can also manifest in reduced motivation to work, inefficiency, and feeling overwhelmed (Merriam, 2015b).

Vicarious trauma is distress arising from professional relationships with clients who have experienced trauma (WHO, 2013). The client traumas that counselors often work with in their line of duty include, but are not limited to, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), natural disasters, intimate personal violence, and accidents, along with terrorism, sexual abuse, and school and work violence.

Perspectives From the Field

Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, and Vicarious Trauma: Wellness Suggestions for Professional Counselors

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Vicarious trauma has the potential to have a negative impact and causes long-lasting distortions in the cognitions, emotions, and behaviors of professionals (Bercier & Maynard, 2015). Vicarious trauma is associated with anxiety, depression, hopelessness, inhibited personal relationships, and substance use (Sui & Padmanabhanunni et al., 2016). Unaddressed vicarious trauma affects the quality of care provided by helping professionals by impairing professional judgment and diminishing service delivery (Branson, 2019).

Wellness Suggestions for Professional Counselors

Wellness in the counseling profession is described as a lifestyle that revolves around attaining an optimum state of health and well-being, conceptualized in a cohesive combination of the body, mind and spirit (Ohrt et al., 2019). Counselors should be aware that they themselves are not immune to pressures of life even though they help people through their mental health concerns (Adams, 2014). Relatedly, counselors should seek their own mental health counseling as needed.

Professional counselors should ensure that they create demarcations between professional and personal life (Reeves, 2018). Self-care can be categorized in two types: personal and professional. Personal self-care activities includes eating a healthy diet, being outdoors, seeing friends and family, engaging in hobbies, and taking vacations (Brownlee, 2016). Professional self-care involves maintaining a balanced and reasonable schedule, staying organized, engaging in supervision or peer support, and reflective activities such as journal writing (Brownlee). Additional evidence-based self-care techniques for counselors include mindfulness and self-compassion (Bush, 2015; Norcross & Guy, 2018).

Perspectives From the Field

Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, and Vicarious Trauma: Wellness Suggestions for Professional Counselors

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Counseling graduate students must create time to acquire unique self-care skills while in training despite their busy schedules (Nelson et al., 2018). Some students assume that self-care should be cultivated after finishing graduate school and becoming employed. However, self-care practices should be established and nurtured while in counselor education programs (Barnett & Homany, 2022).

Furthermore, counselor trainees must invest quality time to explore their expectations of the profession rather than just focusing on earning the qualifications. They should make deliberate efforts to understand their professional responsibilities and consider their personal work styles, interests and values (Meyers, 2015). Counselor trainees should develop a realistic perception of the likely challenges for professional counselors, such as potential values conflicts, lack or inadequacy of professional collaborations and supervision, and heavy caseloads (Meyers, 2015). While in their graduate programs, counselor trainees should form support groups that will promote social connectedness and peer mentoring throughout their careers.

Counselor educators have a great responsibility to help counselor trainees develop self-care practices. Counselor educators should conceptualize and integrate critical aspects of self-care into curricular and internship experiences (Nelson et al., 2018; Choi & Hyun, 2023). During class sessions, counselor educators could provide opportunities for students to share their experiences, expectations, and healthy ways to navigate challenges. By operating from a wellness paradigm, supervisors can cultivate a focus on supervisees' personal wellbeing and how supervisees' wellness impacts client outcomes (Lambie & Blount, 2016).

Supervisors and counselor educators have the unique opportunity to work hand-in-hand with new counselors to address work-related challenges on a daily basis.

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Conclusion

Burnout is exhaustion and negativity due to chronic workplace stress (Abramson, 2022; De Hert, 2020, WHO, 2024). Compassion fatigue is an extension of burnout that is specific to helping professionals working with individuals in challenging and distressing circumstances (Merriman, 2015a). Vicarious trauma is a further extension of compassion fatigue associated with repeatedly hearing details and supporting people through their experiences of trauma (WHO, 2013). Any of these professional hazards can compromise a counselor's ability to effectively and ethically support clients toward wellness. Each counselor should determine how to attain and maintain their own wellness to best serve their clients and avoid the deleterious effects of burnout, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma.

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Perspectives From the Field

Specializing in Practice: A Graduate Counseling Student's Perspective

By Grace Hairr

As a graduate counseling student, there are several factors to consider as we near the close of our academic journey; one such consideration, a specific area of practice in which to specialize. I am in my final semester of graduate school and, upon graduation, I am eligible to apply for both the LCMHC-Associate and LCAS-Associate credential. The clinical mental health counseling program at The University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP), in which I am currently enrolled, afforded me the opportunity to explore both of my niche interests during my internship experiences. I have been able to provide services as a counseling-student-intern to individuals with both substance use disorders (SUD) and eating disorders (ED). I completed my Internship I field placement experience at an agency specializing in addiction treatment, with options for medication assisted treatment (MAT). My current and final field placement site is at an agency that specializes in providing services for clients with ED. More specifically, this site focuses on intensive outpatient and outpatient treatment for ED, SUD, and trauma. Being able to provide counseling services as an intern in both settings has shown me the importance of providing non-siloed care for individuals with comorbid SUD and ED diagnoses.

Grace Hairr is a master's student at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

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Perspectives From the Field

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Scope of the Problem

In 2023, 48.7 million individuals above the age of 12 reported having a SUD (SAMHSA, 2024). EDs also affect a significant number of individuals. Approximately 9% of the population, or 28.8 million Americans, struggle with an ED over the course of their lifetime (ANAD, 2024). Combined, approximately 35% of individuals diagnosed with a SUD also have an ED (NEDA, 2024). Providing counseling services for individuals with both SUD and ED is complex because they share similar behavioral and diagnostic characteristics. Individuals diagnosed with a SUD or ED endorse symptoms related to the need for control, compulsivity, tolerance, withdrawal, engaging in secretive behaviors, and being activated or triggered by stress (ANAD, 2024). When clients with SUD and ED enter recovery, both the effects of post acute withdrawal syndrome and malnourishment can diminish their motivation for change (Bahji et al., 2022).

When we consider the 35% of individuals with SUD, who also struggle with ED, finding non-siloed treatment is even more complicated. Many ED treatment programs will not accept clients with SUD unless they have been in remission for an extended period of time. This could be due to the fact that most ED facilities do not have the capability to manage the medical aspects of SUD; however, treating SUD and ED separately can become difficult for clients to remain in recovery for both (ANAD, 2024). This specialized and non-siloed treatment is often inaccessible for most clients and not always covered by insurance (Penwell et al., 2024). Additional barriers to finding treatment for SUD and ED simultaneously include stigma, overall cost, an understanding of the mortality rates associated with comorbid SUD and ED, and lacking a knowledgeable and healthy support system (ANAD, 2024).

Perspectives From the Field

Specializing in Practice: A Graduate Counseling Student's Perspective

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The complexities associated with treating SUD and ED combined with the high mortality rates highlight the need for counseling-student-interns to receive education, training, and experience in providing specialized areas of practice.

My Perspective as a Counseling Student

As a counseling student at UNCP, I have been fortunate to be mentored by a University Supervisor who specializes in SUDs as well as a Field Placement Supervisor who specializes in both SUDs and EDs. Because of this mentorship, and the educational and training opportunities I have been able to participate in, I am gaining invaluable experiences on the importance of these programs and how to treat SUD and ED simultaneously. I am also learning more about the physical impacts that make comorbid SUD and ED so dangerous and life threatening.

Providing specialized care for individuals with SUDs and EDs has been challenging because of the high mortality rate as well as fluctuations in client motivation and their tendency to be resistant to change (ANAD, 2024). Working as a counseling-student-intern in this specialized setting initially created a lot of anxiety for me. I was nervous to work with SUD and ED because of how complex and dire treating both SUD and ED can be. I was initially overly focused on always saying the “right thing” and would often question my ability to provide counseling services based on my clients’ successes in recovery. As I enter into my final internship, I realize I have been able to grow past this and focus on my clients needs instead of trying to constantly quantify their treatment. Work-life balance was another aspect I needed to practice while at these sites due to the high mortality and relapse rates associated with SUDs and EDs. I found myself

Perspectives From the Field

Specializing in Practice: A Graduate Counseling Student's Perspective

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often preoccupied with what happened during the day, with clients, that I was unable to be present with my family in my off work hours. I am still working on finding the balance that works best for me, and am grateful to have had the opportunity to work in such specialized settings while in my internship. It has solidified my interest in working with individuals diagnosed with SUDs and EDs and has taught me valuable lessons in how to treat clients with comorbidity.

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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

NCCA membership is required to submit articles to the *Carolina Counselor*.

Submission Deadlines

Spring: February 28

Summer: May 31

Fall: August 31

Winter: November 30

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Carolina Counselor Editor



Nicole Stargell, PhD, LCMHC, LSC, NCC, BC-TMH is the Director of Information and Technology for the North Carolina Counseling Association. Nicole is a Professor in the Department of Counseling at the University of North Carolina Pembroke. She serves as the Department Chair and Testing Coordinator, and Chapter Faculty co-Advisor for the Phi Sigma Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota. She is a member of the UNCP Institutional Review Board and the editorial board for *Teaching & Supervision in Counseling*.

Carolina Counselor Associate Editor



Vanessa Doran, MAEd, LCMHC, NCC currently works at Jodi Province Counseling Services, PLLC in Jefferson, NC serving a rural community with an array of mental health needs. As a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor and National Certified Counselor, she works with children as young as 2 years old to adults ages 40+, and everyone in between. Vanessa thoroughly enjoys working with middle and high school age kids and utilizing CBT, Person Centered, and Existential Theory in her counseling office. She graduated with an MAEd in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from the University of North Carolina Pembroke in 2016, and her BA in Psychology with a minor in Sociology from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Vanessa enjoys learning about Expressive Arts therapy, Animal Assisted Therapy, and Play Therapy.

Back to School!

“Dedicated to the growth and development of the counseling profession and those who are served.”

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A
- The fundamental purposes of the North Carolina Counseling Association shall be:
- To provide a united organization through 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.

NCCA Board of Directors: <https://www.n2ca.org/board-of-directors>

Join NCCA: <https://n2ca.memberclicks.net/join>

The NC Counseling Association, a state branch of the American Counseling Association, represents professional counselors in various work settings.

Executive Director:
Jennifer Carlson
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Director of Information & Technology:
Dr. Nicole Stargell
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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.
<https://www.n2ca.org>