

The top of the page 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

Spring 2024

Official Newsletter of the North Carolina
Counseling Association

Carolina Counselor



Official Newsletter of the NCCA

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NCCA Annual Conference
Was a Success!

Counseling Compact for NC
Anticipated Late 2024

Have a Contribution for the Newsletter?

Email your submission to:
nccounselingassociationweb
@gmail.com

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ngAssociation

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n2ca.org

Inside This Issue

Branch News	5
Diversity and Advocacy	18
Division News	21

2023-2024 Executive Officers

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Government Relations: Bill Stewart

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Inside This Issue

Published April 2024

Branch News

- *NCCA Annual Conference a Success!*
[Page 5](#)
- *NCCA Annual Awards*
[Page 17](#)

Diversity and Advocacy

- Trans and Gender Expansive Youth are Loved, Supported, and Valued
Angela Brooks-Livingston
[Page 18](#)

Division News

- *MGCANC*
[Page 21](#)
- *NCCSJ*
[Page 24](#)
- *SAIGE-NC*
[Page 26](#)

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

NCCA Annual Conference a Success!



2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 15-17

EMBASSY SUITES BY HILTON GREENSBORO

Change, Adapt, or Lose: The Imperative for Advocacy in Counseling



<https://n2ca.org/annual-conference>

Branch News

NCCA Annual Conference a Success!



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NCCA Annual Conference a Success!



<https://n2ca.org/annual-conference>

Branch News

NCCA Annual Awards

Congratulations to NCCA 2023 Award Recipients!

Ella Stephens Barrett Award -
Dr. Regina Gavin Williams

Don C. Locke Multicultural and Social Justice Award -
Angela Brooks-Livingston

Jane E. Myers Wellness Counseling Award -
Dr. Sarah Moore

Innovation & Creativity in Counseling Award -
Dr. Yasmin E. Gay

Professional Writing & Research Award -
Dr. Chad Luke

Devoted Service Award -
Dr. Kerri Legette McCullough

Administrator of the Year Award -
Dr. Allison Crowe

Special Citizen's Merit Award -
Maria Averza

<https://www.n2ca.org/awards>

Diversity and Advocacy

Trans and Gender Expansive Youth are Loved, Supported, and Valued

by Angela Brooks-Livingston

On February 8, 2024, Nex Benedict, a vibrant, successful, Choctaw, non-binary teen died. The story of their death is the subject of many national media stories, TikTok reels, Instagram posts, and conversations among families throughout the country. Because of the internet, social media, and how fast information can get disseminated, it is difficult to know what exactly happened and what is happening now in regards to the investigation. What is known is that Nex Benedict died, a family and tribe are grieving, and the trans/gender expansive community is heart broken.

I wanted to write about this when I heard about it and found myself having a hard time sitting down and doing it; mainly because of all the feelings I noticed in my body including anger, sadness, grief, passion, and empathy. As a parent, I feel a deep grief for Nex's family. I definitely hugged my little one tighter the last few days. As a genderqueer person, I feel infuriated at the lack of action by the school, and the continued, hateful rhetoric we hear from elected officials. As an activist, I feel the need to do something, to make noise about the injustice. As a human, I feel sadness about how we treat each other and gratitude for the community rising up to support this family in Oklahoma.

I am an activist for the trans/gender expansive community, and so I want to do something in response to this tragedy and feel like I come up short. There are candle vigils being coordinated in Oklahoma and across the country. There is a GoFundMe to help Nex's family with expenses. Many famous people, including Vice President Kamala Harris, are posting messages on social media. What else can we do? Where can we make a difference in the hate that is constantly spewed to our community? I believe it is not through responding with hate, going after people through verbal, hateful speech. I believe we do have to hold people

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Diversity and Advocacy

Trans and Gender Expansive Youth are Loved, Supported, and Valued

Page 2 of 3

accountable for their actions and words, through empathy and conversation, not hateful posts on social media. The adults in Oklahoma, at the local and state level, need to be held responsible. We need to demand justice for Nex Benedict and their family. We need to look farther down the road and strategize about how to battle this hateful, dark Nothing (yes, Nothing, from The Neverending Story) that is plaguing our country. Educate ourselves on who is running for office this year, what have they voted on in regards to bills or laws targeting the trans/gender expansive community. It is time we get away from voting for a party and vote for people who know the importance of keeping members of our communities and country safe.

We need to make it known to our trans/gender expansive youth that they are loved, supported, and valued. According to GLAAD,

The impact from Nex's death is being felt throughout the Owasso community and beyond. Rainbow Youth Project, a social welfare nonprofit organization that promotes the health, safety, and wellbeing of 2SLGBTQ+ (Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) young people throughout the United States, reported 349 crisis contacts received between February 16th and February 20th. Incoming contacts usually average 87 per week.

Gender expansive teens deserve to live to be gender expansive adults. They deserve to go to school and be safe. They deserve to live authentically, happily, and joyfully. Find a gender expansive youth, gender expansive adult, gender expansive member of your community and let them know they are loved. Support them when you go to vote. Support them at school board meetings, at the county

Diversity and Advocacy

Trans and Gender Expansive Youth are Loved, Supported, and Valued

Page 3 of 3

commissioners meeting, at the church leadership meeting. Ask leaders in these meetings how they support the trans/gender expansive community. Compassionately challenge people in your life when you hear hateful comments or microaggressions about the gender expansive community.

Lastly, we need to examine our own thoughts and feelings about the trans/gender expansive community. Evangelical community members (I feel it is an insult to call them Christians because they do not exemplify the teachings of Christ) and far-right political party members spew hateful speech that influences people and policies that lead to tragedies like the death of Nex Benedict.

This is a tragedy, and we need to come together as a human community to fight against this violence. Within our righteous anger, we need to be aware of respecting the Benedict family, other advocacy organizations, and not using Nex's death as the next viral hashtag that is forgotten in a week. This family and community are going to need support for longer than a week. At this time, the community needs to respect the Benedict family, give them privacy to grieve, and adjust to this new life for their family. We do not need to steal activist language from Black Lives Matter, so please refrain from using "Say Their Name" when posting about Nex Benedict. Find within yourself what your capacity is for tackling the hate you hear. Do what you can, it takes all of us!

Peace and Love!
Angela Brooks-Livingston

Division News

MGCA-NC: First Responders, CEs & Students... Oh My!

By Bill Stewart

Did you know that North Carolina has one of the largest military communities in the United States? We have the fourth largest active-duty population thanks to large bases like Fort Liberty, Camp Lejeune, and Pope Air Force Base. We have the eighth largest population of veterans as many opt to stay in North Carolina after their service. These veterans are dying by suicide at a 55% higher rate than non-veterans. At MGCA, we are committed to supporting the military and government employees by helping prepare more counselors to support them. This month, we have several exciting updates.

First, at MGCA, we have historically had greater focus on the military as many of our members have ties to that community. Although we aspire to have all of our programs apply to any client who walks through your door, we have tended to use examples from the military to illustrate points. We are pleased to be expanding our focus to include first responders as we have new members with experience in those spaces. Although many of the challenges are similar, we hope to address some of the unique issues that first responders face.

Bill Stewart is a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor – Associate who works in private practice where he spends part of his time working with the military community. Bill is the current president of the Military and Government Counseling Association of North Carolina and is the Member-at-Large for Government Affairs for NCCA. Prior to becoming a counselor, Bill served as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne followed by a career at Johnson & Johnson. Bill also holds an MBA from Duke University.



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Division News

MGCA-NC: First Responders, CEs & Students... Oh My!

Page 2 of 2

As our goal is to prepare more counselors to provide support to the military and government communities, we are also pleased to announce that there will be no charge for students to join MGCA-NC. We welcome students to learn more about these communities so that you are better trained to connect to them and support their mental health needs.

Finally, MGCA is pleased to announce two upcoming CE training sessions – April 20 and May 18 – in support of April, the Month of the Military Family and May in support of Memorial Day. Each session will be a 3-hour virtual training on various topics related to supporting military families. We will include sessions on military family resilience, the impact of deployments, the role of grief and loss, and more. We will also feature our first session on working with first responders. These programs will be free to MGCA-NC members and offered at reduced rates for NCCA members. Expect more details and registration info in the near future.

We hope you are able to join us at one or both of our events. We also welcome new members to MGCA-NC. This year, our members will have an opportunity for 7 free CEs while gaining greater comfort in supporting military and first responders.



The Military and Government Counseling Assoc of NC
is proud to host:

The Month of the Military Child

April 20, 2024 from 9AM - 1215PM



In honor of the Month of the Military Child, MGCA-NC will host a virtual CE training session designed to help counselors understand the unique challenges that military families face. This session will offer 3 CEs and will include the following topics:

- Military Family Resilience Training
- Impact of Deployment on Military Spouses and Children
- Grief and Loss in Military Families.

The cost for the event is:

- MGCA-NC members & students: FREE (use discount code: MGCANC)
- NCCA members: \$30
- Non-members: \$65

As a reminder, MGCA-NC annual dues are \$15 so we encourage NCCA members to join MGCA-NC to receive CEs for this and other events at no charge. We will be hosting a second event in May with more details to follow.

Great Option for CEs Prior to June Renewal!

RSVP NOW



Division News

North Carolina Counselors for Social Justice

Page 1 of 2

There's a moment where you have to choose whether to be silent or to stand up.
-Malala Yousafzai

I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept.
-Angela Davis

We are called to be advocates! The American Counseling Association defines advocacy as “promotion of the well-being of individuals, groups, and the counseling profession within systems and organizations. Advocacy seeks to remove barriers and obstacles that inhibit access, growth, and development.” It is time for counselors to be active in social justice advocacy because injustices, microaggressions, and oppression affect us and the clients we work with.

The North Carolina Counselors for Social Justice is committed to advocacy and making noise about injustices throughout society. Activism is taking an active role in attempting to dismantle systems of oppression, including the helping professions. We believe relationships and community activism are effective interventions to address disparities. It is imperative for counselors to be involved in the political process, and to fiercely advocate for social justice in our profession, communities, and schools. Join us in making noise!

We are near the end of the process for being an official division within NCCA. We hope to have an interest group meeting within April to give updates. If you want to be added to the list of interest and get updates, please email Dr. Sarah Moore, mooresa@wfu.edu.

Division News

North Carolina Counselors for Social Justice

Page 2 of 2

When you see something that is not just, not fair, or not right, you have to do something. You have to say something. Make a little noise. It's time for us to get into good trouble, necessary trouble.

-John Lewis

Activism is my rent for living on the planet.

-Alice Walker

Current officers

President: Angela Brooks-Livingston

President-elect: Sarah Moore

Secretary/Treasurer: Whitney Akers

Social Media representative: Michael Branton

Division News

SAIGE-NC

Congratulations to SAIGE-NC Award Recipients!

2024 Outstanding Advocacy Award
*Master's Student-Tyler Young
(Right)*



2024 Outstanding
Advocacy Award
*Clinician-Bill
Stewart
(Left)*

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 an Associate 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 Assistant 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.

Happy New Year!

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

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- 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:
Tish Broomfield
info@n2ca.org

Director of Information & Technology:
Dr. Nicole Stargell
nccounselingassociationweb@gmail.com

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>