

Texas Council of Community Centers

2025 Texas Council CONFERENCE





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WELCOME

TO THE 2025 TEXAS COUNCIL CONFERENCE!



Welcome to the 2025 Texas Council Conference at the Sheraton Downtown Dallas!

Our agenda is packed with opportunities to learn, connect, and return home with fresh ideas and insights drawn from the shared expertise of our system of care.

Join us for an array of breakout sessions designed to inspire innovation and spark collaborative solutions across our system. Learn to recognize and respond to compassion fatigue in clinical leadership and explore how AI can empower mental health professionals. Stay current with sessions covering state policy, legislative updates, and emerging ethical questions in and healthcare.

We're delighted to feature a dynamic lineup of keynote speakers:

- » Cherene Caraco, a survivor, executive director, and peer services expert, will share powerful lessons from her personal and professional journey to remind us how reflecting on the past can help shape a better future, and how truly seeing others can lead to more meaningful, effective services.
- » Kory Shrum, best-selling author and podcaster, best-selling author and podcaster, will offer self-care tools for care providers to strengthen resilience while staying connected to their causes, drawing upon an inspiring account of her path to resilience, shaped by trauma and healing following the tragic loss of her mother.
- » Jeff Harry will energize the stage with his interactive session on bringing a spirit of play into our lives and work to boost both productivity and joy.

From our breakout session to our plenary sessions, every event offers knowledge-building resources to strengthen our commitment to moving our system forward.

A heartfelt thank you to Metrocare, our incredible conference host, for welcoming us to Dallas with Texas-sized spirit. Even in the midst of construction on their new building, they've gone above and beyond to help make this event special. We're grateful for their warm hospitality!

On Thursday, stop by to say "hello" and show appreciation to our generous exhibitors and sponsors. Their support helps power our shared mission, and they're excited to show how their tools and services can strengthen the work we do every day.

I'm so glad you're here. I hope you enjoy the conference, and find time to relax, recharge, and have some fun with friends and colleagues.

Welcome to Dallas, and to an unforgettable experience!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald Yezak", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Ret. Sheriff Gerald Yezak
Chair, Board of Directors,
Texas Council of Community Centers

2025 SPONSORS

EVENT LEVEL



UT Health San Antonio
Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences

PLATINUM LEVEL



GOLD LEVEL



SILVER LEVEL



BRONZE LEVEL





2025 EXHIBITORS

- Butler Human Services Furniture
- CareAffirm
- Cedar Crest Hospital & RTC
- Cloud9
- Compliatric
- Connected Health Care
- Consilium Staffing
- ContinuumCloud
- Discovery: Analysts & Consultants
- E3 Integral Solutions
- East Texas Behavioral Healthcare Network
- Eleos Health
- exydoc
- FirstNet Built with AT&T
- Genoa Healthcare
- Integrated Prescription Management
- Iris Telehealth
- ISC Group, Inc.
- Johnson & Johnson
- MarshMcLennan Agency
- MEND
- NAMI Texas
- National University
- Netsmart
- Neurocrine Biosciences
- Optum / United Healthcare
- Oracle Health
- PeerForce Form Communities
- PointClickCare
- Prosumers International
- Protocall Services
- Qualifacts
- Relias
- Shield HealthCare
- Streamline Healthcare Solutions, LLC
- Tejas Health Management
- Texas Applications Specialists, Inc.
- Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts - Texas ABLE Program
- Texas Council Risk Management Fund
- The Wood Group
- Therap Services
- UBEO
- Veteran Spouse Network
- Wellpoint



CONTINUING EDUCATION

Continuing Education Credits

The following types of continuing education credit are offered:

- Social Work (SW)
- Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
- Licensed Marriage and Family Counselor (LMFT)
- Continuing Medical Education (CME)
- Nursing Continuing Professional Development (NCPD)
- Professional Development for Licensed Psychologists (LP)
- Continuing Legal Education (CLE)
- Continuing Professional Education (CPE) for Accountants
- Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors (LCDCs)
- Peers, Family Partners, and Peer Supervisors (MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP)

Requirements for all types of continuing education credit:

1. Check in to a qualifying session via the Texas Council Conference app. A unique check-in code will be provided.
2. Participate in the full session.
3. Complete the session evaluation provided by the app after the session ends. Be sure to complete the evaluation by the end of the conference to receive credit in a timely manner.

Unless noted otherwise below, certificates will be emailed via Eventur, the Texas Council Conference app platform.

Credits for Social Work/LPC/LMFT

Social Work, Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) continuing education credits are offered for all general and breakout educational sessions.

Credits for CME/NCPD/PD for Psychologists/Medical Ethics/Psychology Ethics

Continuing Medical Education:

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Texas Medical Association (TMA) through the joint providership of The Texas Department of State Health Services Continuing Education Program and Texas Council of Community Centers.

The Texas Department of State Health Services Continuing Education Program is accredited by the Texas Medical Association to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The Texas Department of State Health Services Continuing Education Program designates this live activity for a maximum of 6.00 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

This activity has been designated by the Texas Department of State Health Services Continuing Education Program for 1.50 credits of education in medical ethics and/or professional responsibility.

Nursing Continuing Professional Development:

The Texas Department of State Health Services Continuing Education Program is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

The Texas Department of State Health Services Continuing Education Program has designated a maximum of 6.00 contact hours of Nursing Continuing Professional Development.

Licensed Psychologists:

The Texas Department of State Health Services Continuing Education Program has designated a maximum of 6.00 contact hours for Licensed Psychologists.

This activity has been designated by The Texas Department of State Health Services Continuing Education Program for 1.50 hours in professional ethics.

Certificate of Attendance:

The Texas Department of State Health Services Continuing Education Program has designated a maximum of 6.00 hours for attendance.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Credits for Continuing Legal Education (CLE)

This course has been approved for Minimum Continuing Legal Education credit by the State Bar of Texas Committee on MCLE in the amount of 4.50 credit hours, of which 0.0 credit hours will apply to legal ethics/professional responsibility credit.

The following sessions are approved for 1.5 CLE hours each:

- Trustee Roles and Responsibilities, Wednesday, June 25, 2025 from 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
- Insight into the Texas Political Landscape, Thursday, June 26, 2025 from 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.
- State Budget and Legislative Update, Friday, June 27, 2025 from 8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Credits for Continuing Professional Education (CPE) for Accountants

The following sessions have been approved for 1.8 hours each of non-technical Continuing Professional Education (CPE) for Accountants. No prerequisites required.

- State and National Perspectives Panel, Thursday, June 26, 2025, 10:30 a.m. - Noon (1.8 hours)
- All 90-minute breakout sessions (1.8 hours each)

Certificates will be distributed by the credit provider, Tropical Texas Behavioral Health, after the conference.

Credits for Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors (LCDCs)

The following sessions have been approved for 1.5 credit hours each for LCDCs. All credits are general education hours unless otherwise noted.

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Wednesday, June 25, 2025, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. | • Friday, June 27, 2025, 8:30 - 10:00 a.m. |
| » Compassion Fatigue in Clinical Leadership: Prevention and Intervention Strategies | » Ethics, Artificial Intelligence, and Healthcare: Real Issues or Artificial? Part 2 (1.5 hours Ethics credits offered) |
| » From Burnout to Breakthrough: How Artificial Intelligence Empowers Mental Health Professionals | » How Community Health Workers Improve Engagement in Behavioral Health Services |
| » Medication-Assisted and Withdrawal Management Services in Local Mental Health Authorities: The Bluebonnet Trails Experience | » State Budget and Legislative Update |
| • Thursday, June 26, 2025, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m. | |
| » Insight into the Texas Political Landscape | |

Credits for Peers, Family Partners, and Peer Supervisors (MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP)

The following sessions have been approved for credit hours for MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP. All credits are general education hours unless otherwise noted.

- Wednesday, June 25, 2025, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
 - » From Burnout to Breakthrough: How Artificial Intelligence Empowers Mental Health Professionals
 - » Ripple Effects: Understanding How Military Trauma Impacts Veteran Families
- Thursday, June 26, 2025, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.
 - » Yes, You Can! Discover the Roadmap to Bill for Peer and Family Partner Services
- Thursday, June 26, 2025, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
 - » Building Connections in Peer Support: Expanding the Impact of Peer Workers
 - » The Power of Storytelling: Humanizing Our Work, Our Communities, and Ourselves
- Friday, June 27, 2025, 8:30 - 10:00 a.m.
 - » Excellence in Peer Leadership
 - » Effortless Integration: Aligning Zero Suicide with CCBHC Certification
- Friday, June 27, 2025, 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.
 - » Peer Post-Conference Training: Ethical Issues in Peer-Provided Services (3.0 hours Ethics credit offered)

Additionally, Texas Administrative Code allows individuals to also receive credit from any training approved for continuing education for a mental health or substance use disorder professional if the training is also relevant to the skills required of, or services provided by, a peer specialist. See the CE Desk to request more information.

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Day 1, Wednesday, June 25, 2025

All meeting rooms are on the 1st floor except where noted

Time	Activities
7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration (<i>Breakfast - On Your Own</i>) Grand Hall
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Consortia/Workgroup Meetings <div> Consortia Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Management (CFOs) Majestic 1, 37th Floor IDD Austin 2, 2nd Floor Medical Services/Nursing Committee Majestic 4/5, 37th Floor </div> <div> Workgroup Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Administrators and Board Liaisons (BL-SIG) Austin 1, 2nd Floor Communications Special Interest Group (Comm-SIG) Austin 3, 2nd Floor Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) D2/D3 </div>
10:00 a.m. -10:30 a.m.	Break Grand Hall
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch - On your own
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Opening Session - Welcome Dallas Ballroom ABC Welcome and Featured Speaker: Cherene Caraco
3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Break Grand Hall
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All About Access: Same Day, Next Day, and Just in Time Implementation at Gulf Coast Center Room: Majestic 1, 37th Floor Community Leadership in Action: Charting a New Path for Youth Crisis Response Room: D2/D3 Compassion Fatigue in Clinical Leadership: Prevention and Intervention Strategies (LCDC) Room: Majestic 6/7, 37th Floor From Burnout to Breakthrough: How Artificial Intelligence Empowers Mental Health Professionals (LCDC, MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP) Room: Majestic 4/5, 37th Floor Legal Education Attainment Program (LEAP): An Innovative Alternative to Inpatient Juvenile Competency Restoration (LP) Room: Austin 3, 2nd Floor Medication-Assisted Treatment and Withdrawal Management Services in Local Mental Health Authorities: The Bluebonnet Trails Experience (CME, NCPD, LCDC) Room: Austin 2, 2nd Floor Ripple Effects: Understanding How Military Trauma Impacts Veteran Families (MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP) Room: D1 Trustee Roles and Responsibilities (CLE) Room: Austin 1, 2nd Floor
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	Executive Directors & Trustees Reception (Invitation Only) Chaparral Ballroom, 38th Floor
7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Executive Directors Dinner (Invitation Only) Metrocare's New Mental Health & Disability Innovation Center at Hillside

Day 2, Thursday, June 26, 2025

All meeting rooms are on the 1st floor except where noted

<i>Time</i>	<i>Activities</i>
7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration Grand Hall
7:30 a.m. – 8:20 a.m.	Continental Breakfast (Exhibit Hall) Grand Hall
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Poster Sessions Grand Hall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Isolation to Empowerment: Building Community Through Parent Support Groups • How Risk Stratification Can Improve Access to Care for Rural Populations • Integration of LOC1S Care Within Primary Care Settings • Mentorship Matters: Enhancing Resilience Through a Group Mentorship Program • Nothing to Something: Responding to the Call • Occupational Therapy Interventions for All Centers – Even If You Don't Have an Occupational Therapist • Office-Based Opioid Treatment (OBOT) Expansion • Peer Perspective: Changing the Faces of Incarcerated Individuals
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	General Session Dallas Ballroom ABC Frank M. Adams Awards, Featured Speaker: Kory Shrum
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Break (Exhibit Hall) Grand Hall
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	General Session Dallas Ballroom ABC State and National Perspectives Panel
12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch (Exhibit Hall) Grand Hall
1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking the Silence: Suicide Prevention in Schools Room: Austin 2, 2nd Floor • Collaborative Care in Forensic Psychiatry (CME, NCPD, LP) Room: Majestic 6/7, 37th Floor • Innovative Techniques and Tools for Comprehensive Grant Management Room: Majestic 4/5, 37th Floor • Insight into the Texas Political Landscape (CLE, LCDC) Room: D2/D3 • Integrating Non-Medical Drivers of Health (NMDOH) in a Value-Based Integrated Health Home and a FoodRX Program (CME, NCPD) Room: Austin 1, 2nd Floor • Outpatient Biopsychosocial Interventions (OBI): A New Approach to Meet the Mental Health Needs of People with IDD Room: Austin 3, 2nd Floor • Teamwork Makes the Dream Work: A Model Countywide Collaborative Room: Majestic 1, 37th Floor • Yes, You Can! Discover the Roadmap to Bill for Peer and Family Partner Services (MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP) Room: D1

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Day 2, Thursday, June 26, 2025

All meeting rooms are on the 1st floor except where noted

<i>Time</i>	<i>Activities</i>
3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Break (Exhibit Hall) Grand Hall
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bend the Trend: Advancing Early Mental Health Interventions in Schools Room: Austin 2, 2nd Floor • Building Connections in Peer Support: Expanding the Impact of Peer Workers (MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP) Room: D1 • Jailhouse Docs: Psychiatric Care in the County Jail Setting (CME/NCPD/LP) Room: Majestic 6/7, 37th Floor • Stop Dreading Productivity Management: How to Achieve a 93% Compliance Rate! Room: Majestic 1, 37th Floor • The Intersection Between Mental Health and the Housing Crisis Room: Austin 1, 2nd Floor • The Power of Storytelling: Humanizing Our Work, Our Communities, and Ourselves (MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP) Room: D2/D3 • United for Life: The Power of Community in Suicide Prevention Room: Majestic 4/5, 37th Floor • Unlocking Care: PermianCare's Specialized IDD/MH Clinics (CME/NCPD/LP) Room: Austin 3, 2nd Floor
6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.	Center Party Dallas Ballroom ABC

Day 3, Friday, June 27, 2025

All meeting rooms are on the 1st floor except where noted

<i>Time</i>	<i>Activities</i>
7:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Registration Grand Hall
7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast Grand Hall
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Concurrent Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving Agency Growth through Training: A Conversation on Training Clinical Staff Room: Majestic 1, 37th Floor • Effortless Integration: Aligning Zero Suicide with CCBHC Certification (MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP) Room: Austin 1, 2nd Floor • Ethics, Artificial Intelligence, and Healthcare: Real Issues or Artificial? Part 2 (CME/ Medical Ethics, NCPD, LP/Psychology Ethics, LCDC) Room: Austin 2, 2nd Floor • Excellence in Peer Leadership (MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP) Room: Austin 3, 2nd Floor • Hitting the Mark when Building a Jail-Based Competency Restoration Program Room: Majestic 4/5, 37th Floor • How Community Health Workers Improve Engagement in Behavioral Health Services (LCDC) Room: D1 • Saving the Lives of our Most Acute Clients: Including Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) in Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Team Meetings Room: Majestic 6/7, 37th Floor • State Budget and Legislative Update (CLE, LCDC) Room: D2/D3
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	General Session Dallas Ballroom ABC Featured Speaker: Jeff Harry and Send-Off
12:30 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.	Peer Post-Conference Snacks (Peer Participants Only) D2/D3
1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Peer Post-Conference Training D2/D3 Featured Speaker: Dr. Michael Gillette, Ethics Consultant Topic: Ethical Issues in Peer-Provided Services (MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP Ethics)

PRE-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025

CONSORTIA MEETINGS

8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- Financial Management (CFOs) Consortium
Room: Majestic 1, 37th Floor
- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Consortium
Room: Austin 2, 2nd Floor
- Medical Services (MS) Consortium and Nursing Committee
Room: Majestic 4/5, 37th Floor

CLOSED WORKGROUP MEETINGS

8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- Executive Administrators/Board Liaison Special Interest Group (BL-SIG)
Room: Austin 1, 2nd Floor
- Communications Special Interest Group (Comm-SIG)
Room: Austin 3, 2nd Floor

PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS

8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Session
Room: D2/D3, 1st Floor

This presentation will provide MHFA updates on state and national levels from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, Texas Council, and Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).

- Jondell LaFont-Garcia, MHFA Coordinator, HHSC
- Janet Paleo, Director of Government Relations for Recovery-Based Services, Texas Council of Community Centers
- Janicanne Shane, Director of Client Success, Mental Health First Aid USA, The National Council for Mental Wellbeing

GENERAL SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025

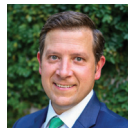
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.



Welcome: Texas House Representative Toni Rose, District 110



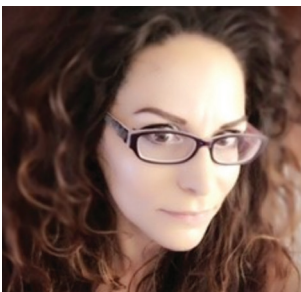
Ret. Sheriff Gerald Yezak
Chair, Board of Directors,
Texas Council of Community Centers



Lee Johnson
Chief Executive Officer,
Texas Council of Community Centers



Dr. John Burruss
Chief Executive Officer,
Metrocare



Cherene Caraco
Why Didn't I Know? Hard Lessons (L)earned

Cherene Caraco is a psychiatric, trauma, and suicide attempt survivor who has spent the past 28 years dedicated to understanding how services

and systems can either support recovery and quality of life—or hinder them.

In 2006, Caraco founded the Charlotte-based non-profit, Promise Resource Network (PRN), which operates open access initiatives led and staffed by a team of individuals who are psychiatric, suicide attempt, trauma, substance use, incarceration and houselessness survivors.

Cherene draws on her lived and extensive professional experience to help providers, states, managed care organizations, and systems implement trauma-informed, recovery-focused practices. In her keynote address, Cherene will share the deep insight she has gained over three decades of experience holding a spectrum of roles as an advocate, family member, direct care provider, Chief Executive Officer and beyond.

GENERAL SESSIONS

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2025

8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.



**Welcome: Dallas County
Judge Clay Lewis Jenkins**



Lee Johnson
Chief Executive Officer,
Texas Council of Community Centers



Kenneth Bernstein
Chairman,
Metrocare Board of Trustees



**Frank M. Adams
Award Ceremony**

This award honors individuals and organizations who best exemplify the late Frank M. Adams' spirit of caring through volunteerism on behalf of persons with

serious mental illness, substance use disorders and intellectual disabilities.



Ret. Sheriff Gerald Yezak
Chair, Board of Directors, Texas
Council of Community Centers



Dr. Linda Holloway
Board Member
Denton County MHMR
Center Board of Trustees



Kory Shrum

Helping the Helpers: A Well Cared For Human

Kory M. Shrum is a bestselling author and founder of A Well Cared For Human, a platform for personal growth. She hosts two podcasts—Who Killed My

Mother? and A Well Cared For Human—and shares the message that your future can be bright, no matter your past.

The mental health field is facing unprecedented challenges and when your role is centered on caring for others, it can be easy to sacrifice your own well-being—until the cost becomes too great.

In this empowering keynote, Kory deconstructs the most common self-care myths that keep providers stuck in cycles of stress, exhaustion, and disconnection, revealing why traditional approaches to wellness often fail. By understanding and implementing the four essential pillars of true wellness, participants will leave equipped with actionable tools to navigate workplace challenges, adapt to ongoing industry changes, and continue making a meaningful impact—without sacrificing themselves in the process.

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2025

10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

State & National Perspectives Panel

State and national leaders will share their perspectives on opportunities and challenges in the changing healthcare environment and the health and human service system in Texas.



Chuck Ingoglia

President and CEO, The National Council for Mental Wellbeing



Trina Ita

Deputy Executive Commissioner, Behavioral Health Services, Texas HHSC



Jonah Cunningham

President and CEO, National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors



Lee Johnson

Chief Executive Officer, Texas Council of Community Centers



Haley Turner

Deputy Executive Commissioner, Community Services, Texas HHSC

FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2025

10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.



Jeff Harry

Reigniting Your Workplace and Rediscovering Your Why Through Play

Jeff Harry shows individuals and companies how to tap into their true selves to feel their happiest and most fulfilled

— all by playing. Recognized as a top HR influencer, he's worked with organizations such as Google, the NFL, and Meta to show that embracing play leads to greater creativity, connection, and growth.

Life demands a lot from us, but are we creating space for ourselves to do our best work and enjoy the journey? In this interactive keynote, Jeff will show how to use positive psychology techniques to help find your why, explore your play values, and rediscover actionable ways to get into flow, so you can be your best and do your best work.

SPECIAL EVENTS



Mental Health First Aid: Find the Hidden Koalas Scavenger Hunt

The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Workgroup is hosting a scavenger hunt to find the hidden koalas! ALGEE the Koala is the mascot of MHFA. Discreetly hidden ALGEEs are scattered throughout the conference venue, waiting to be discovered. Search high and low - in plants, on railings, under chairs, or in elevator corners. Snap a picture of your finds, then decide: take the koala home, or re-hide them for others to enjoy!

Share your discoveries with the hashtag #AlgeeTCC25 to spread the joy. You can also submit your ALGEE snapshots to win prizes - check out Scavenger Hunt flyers to learn how to enter the drawing! This game is all about fostering a sense of community and delight among conference participants.

Happy hunting!

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES RECEPTION *(INVITATION ONLY)*

6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. | Reception Room: Chaparral, 38th floor

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS DINNER *(INVITATION ONLY)*

7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Metrocare's New Mental Health and Disability Innovation Center at Hillside (Shuttle provided)
1433 N Westmoreland Road Dallas, TX 75211

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2025

POSTER SESSIONS

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. | Room: Grand Hall

Browse posters or strike up a discussion with a colleague in this open educational setting. Presenters will come and go but the posters will be available all day! Full poster session descriptions are available on Page 18.

CENTER RECEPTION

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. | Room: Dallas Ballroom ABC

The Center Reception is casual dress and open attendance. Drop in for some snacks and refreshments! Door prizes are generously provided by Host Center, Metrocare.

FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2025

PEER POST-CONFERENCE TRAINING: ETHICAL ISSUES IN PEER-PROVIDED SERVICES

Snacks (Peer Participants Only): 12:30 - 1:15 p.m.

Educational Session: 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. | Room: D2/D3

3 hours of continuing education ethics credit for Peers, Family Partners, and Supervisors of Peers and Family Partners will be offered for this session. Snacks will be provided for Peer and Family Partner participants.

This highly interactive, case-based discussion will review ethical issues that are likely to arise for peer professionals in a variety of service environments. The session will begin with reviewing important information about the process of applied ethics analysis and decision-making, and then discuss a series of challenging and relevant case studies. Topics will include, but not be limited to, professionalism in peer-provided services, boundaries and dual relationships, confidentiality, and ethics of team dynamics.

SPEAKER:

- Michael Gillette, PhD, Consultant, Bioethical Services of Virginia, Inc.

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify core ethical commitments in the nature of the peer provision of services.
- » Explain how issues of confidentiality impact the peer provision of services.
- » Define boundaries and dual relationships in the peer provision of services.

Texas Council of Community Centers, Inc. | Provider No. 2074-21

Provider approved by the TCB Standards Committee, Provider No. 2074-21, three (3) hours ethics. Expires 6/2025.

Complaints about provider or workshop content may be directed to the TCB Standards Committee, PO BOX 342343, Lakeway, TX 78734, Fax (888) 506-8123.

POSTER SESSIONS

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2025

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. | Room: Grand Hall

FROM ISOLATION TO EMPOWERMENT: BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS

Parents of children with serious mental illness often feel isolated, increasing their stress and affecting their well-being. Culturally competent parent support groups can help by fostering community and enabling parents to share experiences and coping strategies, which enhances emotional resilience. Visit this poster to learn how to create successful support groups that prioritize family voices and explore funding approaches like community collaboration. The poster emphasizes empowering family partners as leaders and incorporating their feedback into decision-making, ultimately creating inclusive environments that strengthen support networks for families.

» Samantha Hernandez, Family Partner, Integral Care

HOW RISK STRATIFICATION CAN IMPROVE ACCESS TO CARE FOR RURAL POPULATIONS

Traditional risk stratification methodologies are built for a primarily insured patient census, with most health indicators being relatively stable, and with adequate resources that are often found in an urban environment. Burke developed an adapted risk stratification process to enhance service delivery within two of their rural, outpatient primary care clinics. By categorizing patients based on their health complexities and social determinants of health, Burke was able to allocate limited resources and staffing more effectively. This poster explores how stratification enabled Burke to identify critical NMDOH needs, tailor interventions accordingly, and monitor outcomes for further improvement.

» Caleb Hill, MPA, Director of Integrated Health, Burke

INTEGRATION OF LOC1S CARE WITHIN PRIMARY CARE SETTINGS

As the nation moves forward with integrated care initiatives, Texas Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) are struggling to keep pace within state guidelines for the provision of services. This poster will highlight The Center for Health Care Services integrated model of care that brings patients at Level 1 of the Level of Care Utilization System (LOC1S) into care under the Center's Primary Care umbrella. This model is able to provide Primary Care services, as well as needed Texas Resilience and Recovery (TRR) services, under one unit. This poster will highlight how the entire integrated team works together for optimal outcomes, both physically and mentally, for the clients within the Center, as well as challenges and successes of the rollout.

» Michelle Stewart, MHSA, LSSBB, Program Director, Primary Care, The Center for Health Care Services

» Clarissa Aguilar, PhD, Director of Psychology Training, The Center for Health Care Services

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2025

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. | Room: Grand Hall

MENTORSHIP MATTERS: ENHANCING RESILIENCE THROUGH A GROUP MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Development of a mentorship program for new employees can provide additional avenues for support to staff via social learning, and through relationships with professional peers. This approach can help provide staff exposure to the broader organization, while offering the flexibility to provide opportunities to address relevant concerns in the moment, rather than following a prescriptive content outline. This poster will demonstrate a model of what a group mentoring program looks like, from planning to operationalization, using materials from Integral Care's development process, direct experience highlights from program participants, and data from surveys collected from participants.

- » Laurel Mollere, LCSW-S, Practice Manager – Behavioral Health Clinic, Integral Care
- » David West, LCSW, LCDC, Associate Director of Integrated Systems of Care, Integral Care

NOTHING TO SOMETHING: RESPONDING TO THE CALL

During an FY24 Budget meeting, the CEO of The Center for Health Care Services asked the Children's Department to develop something to reach out to the community. Limited funding was available for this project, but with the idea of "So what, Now what," the team put together a project called Community Health Awareness in Adolescents and Teens (CHAAT), which was eventually awarded a \$1.2 million SMART grant by HHSC. This poster will provide an overview of CHAAT, an innovative program designed to encourage resiliency, coping, and social skills; develop healthy habits related to sleep hygiene; and improve social and family relationships. This program was developed and funded with the idea that if there is a need, fill the need – even when resources are not there.

- » Nickolas Raczek, MS, MA, LPC, Clinic Administrator, The Center for Health Care Services

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY INTERVENTIONS FOR ALL CENTERS - EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

Occupational Therapists (OTs) comprehensively analyze all aspects of a person's life and areas of function to optimize participation in life activities. OTs help individuals develop new skills, modify the activity, or modify the environment to create the best person-environment-occupation and activity match to maximize function. While it would be amazing if all Community Centers had an OT, we know that it is not always a reality. This poster will share tips to help identify factors from an OT perspective that may be hindering a patient's success. You will also learn OT techniques to improve engagement, learning, and regulation in the patients that your Community Center supports.

- » Laura Golden, OTR, OTD, System Director – Transition and Teaming, MHMR of Tarrant County



POSTER SESSIONS

OFFICE-BASED OPIOID TREATMENT (OBOT) EXPANSION

The opioid crisis is a national health emergency. The number of opioid-related deaths has more than quadrupled since 1999. To combat this epidemic, primary care providers are expanding client access to care, particularly to office-based opioid treatment (OBOT). The Center for Health Care Services (CHCS) OBOT program was established in March 2023 with a grant-approved capacity of 10, and over the next 18 months, overserved the target by 120%. CHCS applied to Be Well, Texas for an increase in capacity and was awarded an additional 10 slots, bringing the total to 20 individual slots. This poster will share the challenges and accomplishments of the CHCS OBOT program expansion.

» Maggie Leal, MBA, LSSBB, Director of Crisis Services, The Center for Health Care Services

PEER PERSPECTIVE: CHANGING THE FACES OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

The Harris County Jail's mental health programs have incorporated peer support services that create guided paths for incarcerated individuals. Through the challenges encompassed by incarceration, Peers highlight opportunities for self-growth and empowerment, which supports incarcerated individuals in their transition of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and links them to community resources. Visit this poster to learn about the development and implementation of a Peer program in a county jail, as well as how incorporating Peers can reduce recidivism and promote positive social behavior.

» Angela Hurd, MS, MA, LPC, ASOTP, Clinical Team Lead, The Harris Center for MH and IDD

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025

3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

ALL ABOUT ACCESS: SAME DAY, NEXT DAY AND JUST IN TIME IMPLEMENTATION AT GULF COAST CENTER

Majestic 1, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

In Gulf Coast Center's experience, if providers are not ready to see patients when they need care, then providers miss the window of engagement opportunity. For this reason, Gulf Coast Center worked to make their system readily available to individuals seeking mental health care by implementing Same Day Access (SDA) and Just in Time (JIT) Prescriber Scheduling. The Center has transformed how rapidly their community engages with them to access behavioral health and psychiatric services, allowing individuals to receive care when they are ready. Get an inside look at how Gulf Coast Center used an internal change management process to tailor SDA and JIT to their needs, and learn how to do the same for your Center.

- Renee Valdez, MD, PhD, Chief Medical Officer, Gulf Coast Center
- Jessica Gentry, LPC-S, LMHC-S, Senior Director of Behavioral Health Services, Gulf Coast Center
- Felicia Jeffery, LPC, Chief Executive Officer, Gulf Coast Center
- Devon Stanley, DSL, PMP, Chief Information Officer, Gulf Coast Center

Learning Objectives:

- » Explain how Same Day Access (SDA) and Just in Time (JIT) Prescriber Scheduling can help to meet Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) 'fast access' requirements.
- » Utilize an organization-wide internal change management approach to tailor the implementation of a novel operational strategy in a way that best meets the needs of the community and the Center.
- » Explain how near immediate access to behavioral health and psychiatry services is operationally feasible and leads to both clinical and financial excellence.



CONCURRENT SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025 | 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: CHARTING A NEW PATH FOR YOUTH CRISIS RESPONSE

D2/D3

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

The pandemic and its aftermath have taken a heavy toll on young people's mental health, often forcing children into emergency rooms and the juvenile justice system. In response, Texas launched eight Youth Crisis Outreach Teams (YCOTs) in late summer 2024 to provide timely, community-based support for youth and families. This panel will discuss YCOT implementation strategies, emerging best practices, and the ways in which this innovative approach provides opportunity for Local Mental Health Authorities to serve as community leaders in addressing the needs of youth and families in mental health crisis.

- Susan Garnett, MSW, Chief Executive Officer, MHMR of Tarrant County
- Jessica Jimenez, LMSW, Program Manager, Children and Adolescent Homeless and Crisis Services, Heart of Texas Behavioral Health Network
- Kelli Guerrero, LPHA, LCSW, Director of Children and Adolescent Crisis Programming, Heart of Texas Behavioral Health Network
- Katie Mitten, LMSW, Director of Cross System Integration, Children's Specialty Healthcare, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute
- Veronica Martinez, Deputy Associate Commissioner of Adult, Crisis and Forensic Mental Health Services, Texas HHSC
- Moderator: Leela Rice, JD, Chief of Behavioral Health Policy, Texas Council of Community Centers

Learning Objectives:

- » Distinguish Youth Crisis Outreach Teams (YCOTs) from Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams (MCOTs) in structure and focus.
- » Identify strategies to engage key local partners that strengthen YCOT implementation and outreach—such as schools, law enforcement, and child protective services,
- » Describe best practices in youth crisis response, including family-centered, trauma-informed care and engagement strategies that reduce emergency room utilization and juvenile justice system involvement.

COMPASSION FATIGUE IN CLINICAL LEADERSHIP: PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Majestic 6/7, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants, LCDC

In high-stress environments, clinical leaders not only face the challenges of patient care, but also bear the responsibility of supporting their teams through emotional and mental strain. This session explores proactive, evidence-based approaches to mitigate compassion fatigue within clinical settings. Drawing on her experience with trauma-informed care and the recent development of Code Lavender, a comprehensive crisis intervention program at Emergence Health Network, Celeste Nevarez, Chief of Clinical Services, will offer practical strategies to foster a culture of resilience and holistic wellbeing among healthcare teams.

- Celeste Nevarez, MC, MPH, LPC-S, Chief of Clinical Services, Emergence Health Network

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify early signs of compassion fatigue in clinical staff and leaders.
- » Implement Code Lavender protocols to offer rapid, meaningful support during times of emotional exhaustion.
- » Develop a structured approach to team debriefings, affirmations, and mindfulness practices that reinforce staff resilience and reduce turnover.

FROM BURNOUT TO BREAKTHROUGH: HOW ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE EMPOWERS MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Majestic 4/5, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants, LCDC, MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP

Two Community Centers, Integral Care and Texana Center, addressed administrative burnout among professionals by using distinct approaches to integrate artificial intelligence (AI). Discussion will begin with identifying the challenges of burnout and strategies for improvement, setting the stage for AI's transformative potential. Presenters from each Center will contrast an embedded approach with an integrated approach, sharing real-world successes and challenges faced in each strategy. Join this session to discover how AI can alleviate administrative burdens while enhancing patient care and professional satisfaction.

- Carin Shuford, Manager of Health Information Systems, Texana Center
- Tera Stellard, Director of Application Support, Integral Care
- Jessica Burger, MEd, LPC, NCC, Clinic Manager, Texana Center
- Damien Speaker, MPH, MBA, MPA, Zero Suicide Program Evaluator, Integral Care

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify industry challenges with administrative burden and opportunities for artificial intelligence (AI) to help.
- » Compare and contrast embedded vs. integrated approaches to utilizing AI.

LEGAL EDUCATION ATTAINMENT PROGRAM (LEAP): AN INNOVATIVE ALTERNATIVE TO INPATIENT JUVENILE COMPETENCY RESTORATION

Austin 3, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, LP, CPE for Accountants

The year 2020 served as the perfect storm for juvenile fitness attainment (competency restoration) reform in Texas, due to significant state hospital waitlists and limited attainment options permitted by statute for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). A multidisciplinary collaborative effort led to key legislative changes, which increased the availability of outpatient alternatives and the development of the Legal Education Attainment Program (LEAP). LEAP, an interactive and developmentally appropriate legal education program, has successfully helped youth attain fitness without needing state hospitalization. This presentation will discuss the emerging need for such programming and walk through LEAP's development, outcomes, and challenges.

- Uche Chibueze, PsyD, ABPP, Assistant Director of Health Services, Harris County Juvenile Probation Department
- Florencia Iturri, PhD, Specialty Court Clinician, Harris County Juvenile Probation Department
- Toni Walker, PhD, Staff Psychologist/LEAP Director, The Harris Center for MH and IDD

Learning Objectives:

- » List the challenges associated with competency restoration for justice-involved youth in Texas.
- » Outline the structure, methodologies, and interactive strategies used by the Legal Education Attainment Program (LEAP) to help youth attain fitness/competency without state hospitalization.
- » Explain the psychologist's role in fitness/competency evaluations, treatment planning, and the implementation of developmentally appropriate interventions within alternative programs like LEAP.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025 | 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT AND WITHDRAWAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES IN LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES: THE BLUEBONNET TRAILS EXPERIENCE

Austin 2, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CME, NCPD, CPE for Accountants, LCDC

With the proliferation of fentanyl use and fentanyl adulteration of the drug supply, challenges to provide community-based medication assisted treatment (MAT) and withdrawal management services are at an all-time high. Dr. Mark Janes and Dr. Carlos Tirado will lead a panel of Bluebonnet Trails providers to describe system-wide efforts to integrate and implement best practices in MAT and withdrawal management in established LMHA programs, including provider education and training, cultural change needs, protocol development and implementation, and integration between behavioral health and psychiatry services.

- Carlos Tirado, MD, MPH, Addiction Psychiatry Medical Director, Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
- Mark Janes, MD, Medical Director, Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
- Courtney Bearden, RN, PMHNP-BC, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
- Jordan Adams, DSW, LCSW-S, LCDC, Assistant Director of Substance Use Services, Bluebonnet Trails Community Services

Learning Objectives:

- » Define current standard of care in the management of fentanyl and alcohol use disorders
- » Identify core competencies for medication assisted treatment (MAT) and withdrawal management services.
- » Review intake and referral models for MAT in community-based programs.

RIPPLE EFFECTS: UNDERSTANDING HOW MILITARY TRAUMA IMPACTS VETERAN FAMILIES

D1

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants, MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP

This presentation explores the often-overlooked ways that military trauma affects not only veterans, but also their families and loved ones. Trauma manifests in unique and complex ways within family systems, affecting family dynamics, communication, mental health, and overall resilience. Participants will gain insights into the ripple effects of military service, particularly how symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety can alter family relationships, emotional wellbeing, and long-term stability.

- Gary Medina, MPA, Homeless Veteran Program Manager, Texas Veterans Commission

Learning Objectives:

- » Describe ways military trauma can impact families of veterans.
- » Identify secondary trauma in family members of veterans.
- » Apply resilience-building strategies for families of veterans.

TRUSTEE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Austin 1, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CLE, CPE for Accountants

This session will generally discuss the legal role that a Board of Trustees plays in the Texas Community Center system and the statutory responsibilities of Trustees as set out in Chapter 534 of the Texas Health and Safety Code. Time will be allotted for a Q&A session to cover practical issues of Board operations and Community Center governance.

- Pamela Beach, JD, MBA, BSN, General Counsel, Texas Council Risk Management Fund

Learning Objectives:

- » Define the legal role trustees play within the Texas Community Center system.
- » Identify the statutory responsibilities of trustees as set out in Chapter 534 of the Texas Health and Safety Code.
- » Explain how the requirements of the Texas Public Information Act and Open Meetings Act apply to Community Centers and trustees.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2025

1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

BREAKING THE SILENCE: SUICIDE PREVENTION IN SCHOOLS

Austin 2, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for Texans ages 10-24. Providing evidence-based suicide prevention and mental wellness trainings to school communities can reduce suicide deaths across the state. This session will explore ways to increase awareness of available school-based suicide prevention resources and trainings and demonstrate engagement activities that can create connections and break barriers with audiences. Participants will also have the opportunity to engage with a panel of licensed professional counselors about available trainings and program implementation.

- Rocio Bickei, MA, Behavioral Health Partnership Program Liaison, Emergence Health Network / ESC 19
- Kendra Cates, LPC, Behavioral Health Partnership Program Liaison, StarCare Specialty Health System/ ESC 17
- Shuniqua Ortiz, LPC, Behavioral Health Partnership Program Liaison, North Texas Behavioral Health Authority/ESC 10
- Jessica Siegfried, LPC, Behavioral Health Partnership Program Liaison, Betty Hardwick Center/ESC 14
- Edwina Thompson, LPC, Behavioral Health Program Partnership Liaison, MHMR of Tarrant County/ESC 11

Learning Objectives:

- » List available suicide prevention and mental wellness trainings for schools.
- » Implement appropriate suicide prevention and mental wellness programs for local school communities.

COLLABORATIVE CARE IN FORENSIC PSYCHIATRY

Majestic 6/7, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CME, NCPD, LP, CPE for Accountants

This presentation will provide an overview of a partnership created by the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) El Paso Department of Psychiatry and the El Paso County Attorney's Office to expand, sustain, and innovate mental health support in El Paso's legal system. By embedding psychiatry residents and forensic fellows in the El Paso Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) program, this initiative fosters interest in forensic psychiatry, reduces stigma, and offers a diverse curriculum for trainee residents and fellows. This program supports trainees to enhance care for Texans in criminal and civil cases by working with the Local Mental Health Authority. The Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health seeks to help implement this model statewide and reinforce Texas's leadership in mental health within the justice system.

- Daniela Chisolm, JD, Senior Staff Attorney, Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health
- Kristi Taylor, JD, Executive Director, Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health
- Patricia Ortiz, MD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Texas Tech University Health Science Center El Paso

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify strategies to expand and sustain mental health services within the legal system.
- » Explain techniques to enhance training and reduce stigma in forensic psychiatry.
- » Discuss methods to promote statewide leadership and implementation of mental health initiatives.

INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS FOR COMPREHENSIVE GRANT MANAGEMENT

Majestic 4/5, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

This presentation will delve into the comprehensive journey of grant management, from pre-award to post-award activities, with a special focus on the experiences and lessons learned by MHMR of Tarrant County. Join to learn valuable insights into effective strategies, innovative tools, and practical techniques that can streamline grant processes and enhance overall efficiency.

- Twanda Wadlington, DrPH, MPH, Senior Director of Development, MHMR of Tarrant County

Learning Objectives:

- » Understand the full lifecycle of grant management and the critical touch points from pre-award to post-award.
- » Gain insights into the practical application of tools and techniques that can enhance grant management efficiency.
- » Learn from the real-world experiences of MHMR of Tarrant County, including best practices and lessons learned.

INSIGHT INTO THE TEXAS POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

D2/D3

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CLE, CPE for Accountants, LCDC

Leaders from the most notable publications in Texas, Quorum Report and Texas Tribune, will share their views on the current and future political landscape in our state. Moderated by Lee Johnson, CEO of Texas Council, this session will feature Harvey Kronberg, Editor and Publisher of Quorum Report, Ross Ramsey, Co-Founder of Texas Tribune, and Hon. Carl Isett, former State Representative, District 84. If you want to know what's really happening and what's ahead in Texas politics, don't miss the chance to hear and interact with these experts!

- Carl Isett, Former State Representative, District 84
- Harvey Kronberg, Editor and Publisher, Quorum Report
- Ross Ramsey, Consultant, Co-Founder of Texas Tribune
- Moderator: Lee Johnson, MPA, Chief Executive Officer, Texas Council of Community Centers

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify current trends in Texas politics impacting special populations, the Community Center system, and the delivery of healthcare.



INTEGRATING NON-MEDICAL DRIVERS OF HEALTH (NMDOH) IN A VALUE-BASED INTEGRATED HEALTH HOME AND A FOODRX PROGRAM

Austin 1, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CME, NCPD, CPE for Accountants

As the mental health system moves toward greater integration of non-medical drivers of health (NMDOH) and whole care approaches, The Harris Center for MH and IDD has embarked on developing value-based shared savings partnerships with managed care companies and MOUs with a local food bank program. In this session, The Harris Center will show how strategic partnerships and innovative programming improved health outcomes, along with patient and provider experiences based on integrated health care management constructs, analytics (population health, risk stratification, and predictive analytics) and screening NMDOH and addressing gaps through upstream early intervention, health promotions, and prevention services.

- Stanley Williams, PhD, LPC, Director of Integrated Health, The Harris Center for MH and IDD
- Scott Hickey, PhD, Director Health Analytics & Research, The Harris Center for MH and IDD
- Ling-Lun Chien, PhD, Project Evaluator, The Harris Center for MH and IDD

Learning Objectives:

- » Describe the framework for evaluation, assessment and interventions related to Non-Medical Drivers of Health (NMDOH).
- » Outline the roles of a multidisciplinary team of physicians, nurses, and care navigators when implementing NMDOH initiatives.
- » Construct a local partnership program that implements NMDOH approaches and analytics to improve health outcomes, sustainability, and data-driven decision-making for individuals served.

OUTPATIENT BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL INTERVENTIONS: A NEW APPROACH TO MEET THE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH IDD

Austin 3, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

People with intellectual disabilities who also experience a mental health condition often struggle to find services and supports that meet their distinct needs. First funded in 2019, the outpatient biopsychosocial interventions (OBI) initiative took shape as a pilot at five Local IDD Authorities, where staff provide a specialized assessment, collaborative case management, skills training, and other integrated supports designed to fill gaps in the continuum of care. The pilot sites have produced many beneficial outcomes for individuals, and generated positive attention locally and from statewide decision-makers and advocacy organizations. With the potential for expansion of the OBI initiative beyond the initial five pilot sites on the horizon, the time is ripe for others to learn about this new and innovative model.

- Melanie Babbitt, LCSW, OBI Supervisor, Integral Care
- Tammy Leffall, Assistant Director of IDD Provider Services, Lakes Regional Community Center
- Tracy Polanco, Network Manager of Crisis Prevention, MHMR of Tarrant County
- Linda Ponce Gay, MS, Director of IDD Crisis Services, Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
- Laurie White, MS, CTRS, Director of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Lakes Regional Community Center
- Amanda Willis, MSW, LCSW-S, Practice Manager - IDD Clinical Services, The Harris Center for MH and IDD
- Moderator: Jamie White, Healthcare Policy Specialist, Texas Council of Community Centers

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify the OBI service delivery model, including identifying essential elements of the program and comparing varying approaches to implementation across current sites.
- » Evaluate outcomes of the OBI initiative, including results achieved for individuals who benefited from the program, lessons learned by the sites through the experience of implementing and operating the initiative, and positive responses from the state agency, decision-makers, and advocacy organizations.
- » Summarize recent budget decisions at the state level and any other opportunities for expanded capacity of the OBI initiative.



CONCURRENT SESSIONS

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2025 | 1:30 - 3:00 P.M.

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK: A MODEL COUNTYWIDE COLLABORATIVE

Majestic 1, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

In 2015, with backbone support from the United Way, the Denton County Behavioral Health Leadership Team was formed to enhance collaboration and identify gaps in mental health services. With this goal in mind, the Leadership Team established the first mental health navigators in the state, became the first county in Texas to offer CredibleMinds free to all residents, and opened a non-medical detox center in collaboration with Texas Health Resources and Solutions of North Texas, a nonprofit organization that provides substance use treatment. This presentation will showcase these resources and discuss how to engage the right partners, as well as obstacles and pitfalls to avoid.

- Linda Holloway, PhD, CRC, Professor Emerita, University of North Texas
- Alex Reed, Division Manager - Community Health, Denton County Health Department
- Pam Gutierrez, Executive Director, Denton County MHMR Center

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify key stakeholders and partners for developing a behavioral health leadership team.
- » Develop strategies and goals for a behavioral health leadership team.
- » Describe the benefits and potential pitfalls of supporting a leadership team.

YES, YOU CAN! DISCOVER THE ROADMAP TO BILL FOR PEER AND FAMILY PARTNER SERVICES

D1

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants, MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP

Have you ever had questions about Medicaid billing for peer and family partner services? Don't fret, attend this session instead! HHSC representatives will guide you through the roadmap of billing for current peer certifications. This presentation will provide data on current peer billing across Texas, discuss advantages and challenges of billing, and describe the types of services that should be provided. Speakers will also facilitate an open dialogue on the roles peers and family partners play along the roadmap.

- Noah Abdenour, CPS, Director Peer Support and Recovery, Texas HHSC
- Miracle Akortha, PSS, MHPS, CFP, Mental Health Program Specialist VI, Texas HHSC
- Carole Blackmon, MS, CFP, QMHP, Peer Support Family Coordinator, Texas HHSC

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify peer billing advantages and challenges.
- » Define compliance with the peer and family partner Medicaid Texas Administrative Code (TAC).
- » Describe the types of services that should be provided based on procedure code type.

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2025

3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

BEND THE TREND: ADVANCING EARLY MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS IN SCHOOLS

Austin 2, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

In school year 2022-2023, Gulf Bend Center leveraged an existing partnership with Victoria Independent School District, the largest school district in their service region, to create the “Bend the Trend” initiative, which aims to strengthen the relationship between schools, family, and community resources. This session will explore how to enhance school-based mental health services through community collaboration. Attendees will be equipped with practical knowledge and tools to help their schools “Bend the Trend” toward better mental health and behavioral outcomes, fostering a supportive environment that addresses the holistic needs of every student.

- Jeffrey Tunnell, CPA, Executive Director, Gulf Bend Center
- Kim Omecinski, QMHP-CS, Director of Behavioral Health Services, Gulf Bend Center
- Michelle Chavez, QMHP-CS, School-Based Mental Health Case Manager, Gulf Bend Center
- Cindy Salinas, MA, Director of MTSS, Victoria Independent School District
- Alisha Hernandez, MEd, Counselor, Victoria Independent School District
- Brandy Garcia, MTSS-B Specialist, Victoria Independent School District
- Lydia Hobbs, MEd, Social Emotional Behavioral Specialist, Victoria Independent School District

Learning Objectives:

- » Design a program that reduces barriers to accessing mental health and behavioral health services and apply proactive early intervention strategies that comprehensively address the social, emotional, and academic needs of students.
- » List strategies for early intervention, effective referral processes, and building partnerships among schools, families, and mental health resources.



CONCURRENT SESSIONS

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2025 | 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS IN PEER SUPPORT: EXPANDING THE IMPACT OF PEER WORKERS

D1

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants, MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP

Peer support is essential in Texas's behavioral health system, providing individuals, youth, and families with lived-experience support through recovery. This presentation shows how Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) programs can enhance attendees' peer support efforts. From supporting justice-involved people and youth to engaging family partners, HHSC's initiatives offer adaptable, community-centered solutions. Attendees will learn practical ways to leverage HHSC resources to improve recovery outcomes, expand non-clinical services, and strengthen family support. An interactive discussion will provide a space to connect, share, and inspire new strategies in peer support.

- Noah Abdenour, CPS, Director of Peer Support and Recovery, Texas HHSC
- Miracle Akortha, PSS, MHPS, CFP, Mental Health Program Specialist VI, Texas HHSC

Learning Objectives:

- » List key HHSC-supported programs available to enhance peer and family partner support for people, youth, and families in recovery.
- » Identify opportunities to incorporate HHSC peer and family partner resources into attendees' existing programs to improve recovery outcomes.
- » Describe strategies for integrating peer and family partner support to strengthen resilience and non-clinical services within community-based recovery programs.

JAILHOUSE DOCS: PSYCHIATRIC CARE IN A COUNTY JAIL SETTING

Majestic 6/7, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CME, NCPD, LP, CPE for Accountants

The largest mental health provider in Texas is the county jail system. With over half (at conservative estimate) of incarcerated persons requiring mental health treatment, Local Mental Health Authorities have a unique opportunity to serve a truly underserved population. Bluebonnet Trails Community Services currently provides psychiatric medication management services in seven county jails and one juvenile detention center. Bluebonnet Trails representatives will discuss the logistics of providing these services, the nuances of treating incarcerated persons and the impact of these services on their community.

- Courtney Bearden, RN, PMHNP-BC, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
- Jonathan Artz, MD, MS, Assistant Medical Director, Bluebonnet Trails Community Services

Learning Objectives:

- » Describe the logistical challenges of implementing a jail psychiatric clinic.
- » Identify unique challenges of treating patients in a county jail setting.
- » Describe the process for completing forced med applications and competency evaluations.

STOP DREADING PRODUCTIVITY MANAGEMENT: HOW TO ACHIEVE A 93% COMPLIANCE RATE!

Majestic 1, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

Failing to achieve productivity goals can have a significant impact on all areas of a Community Center, including employee morale, managerial stress, financial loss and contract compliance. Metrocare's Mental Health Division consistently achieves a 93% productivity rate, after spending years perfecting their approach to productivity management. Their current model is comprehensive with a focus on training/support, weekly report monitoring, and a bonus structure that rewards top performers! Come learn how to develop productivity benchmarks, how to train your staff to be successful, how to monitor those benchmarks for success, and how to develop bonus programs that will motivate and incentivize employees.

- Kelli Laos, MSW, LCSW, Chief Operating Officer, Metrocare
- Jennifer Wadsworth, MA, LPC-S, MBA, Chief Clinical Officer, Metrocare

Learning Objectives:

- » Create an effective productivity benchmark that is attainable and meets business needs.
- » Monitor and analyze productivity reporting to support employees before there is a problem.
- » Explain Metrocare's bonus program which includes individual, team and agency-wide bonus opportunities that promote alignment of efforts from direct care to C-suite.

THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN MENTAL HEALTH AND THE HOUSING CRISIS

Austin 1, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

The relationship between mental health and housing is complex and multifaceted. Addressing the housing crisis with an understanding of its mental health implications is essential for fostering healthier communities. Integrated solutions that provide both housing and mental health support can pave the way for long-term well-being. Join Integral Care in discussing how Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs) can collaborate with housing providers to leverage resources to create pathways to housing stability.

- Kali Holyfield, LPC, LCDC, Deputy Director of Specialty Programs, Integral Care
- Ashley Jones, Practice Manager-Housing Administration, Integral Care

Learning Objectives:

- » Explain the impact of housing instability on mental health.
- » Describe how to assess clients on their housing stability needs and goals, and match them to different housing intervention types.
- » Identify opportunities for LMHAs to support clients experiencing a housing crisis.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2025 | 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

THE POWER OF STORYTELLING: HUMANIZING OUR WORK, OUR COMMUNITIES, AND OURSELVES

D2/D3

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants, MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP

In an era driven by data and policy, storytelling remains one of the most powerful tools we have to connect, advocate, and heal—not only for our communities, but for ourselves. Whether you're in finance, HR, communications, operations, or direct care, the ability to craft compelling narratives can transform how you communicate your mission, secure funding, and drive lasting change.

This interactive session explores how personal, client, and organizational stories can bridge the gap between numbers and lived experiences—ensuring the true human impact of your work is seen and valued. Drawing on real-world examples—including how speaker Kory Shrum shared *Who Killed My Mother* to advocate for justice—Kory will discuss how powerful storytelling can cut through bureaucracy, inspire action, and reinforce the value of your investments.

Participants should come ready to engage in guided writing exercises and explore their own internal narratives, including limiting beliefs that may contribute to burnout or self-silencing. Come learn how to rewrite personal and professional stories to reflect strength, resilience, and purpose, and gain tools to help others do the same.

- Kory Shrum, Bestselling Author and Keynote Speaker

Learning Objectives:

- » Use storytelling techniques to humanize data and metrics, making their work more compelling to funders, policymakers, and stakeholders.
- » Craft narratives that highlight victories and day-to-day successes, reinforcing the impact of work beyond numerical outcomes.
- » Identify and revise internal narratives or limiting beliefs that may impact personal well-being or professional expression.

UNITED FOR LIFE: THE POWER OF COMMUNITY IN SUICIDE PREVENTION

Majestic 4/5, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

This presentation focuses on how rural communities can build effective first aid for individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts. Speakers will explore the formula for suicidal thoughts, which often stem from feelings of hopelessness and helplessness, and discuss the importance of recognizing these signs early. Then, discussion will explore how community attitudes and stigma can act as barriers, preventing individuals from seeking help. Participants will learn strategies for creating a supportive, open environment where people feel safe to talk and receive the help they need.

- Dennis Steelman, MA, LPC-S, LCDC, Program Manager, ACCESS
- Marisela Gutierrez, MS, LPA-I, CCBHC Program Director, Andrews Center
- Michelle Matthews, BS, Suicide Prevention Coordinator, ACCESS

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify how collective efforts from schools, healthcare providers, local organizations, and families can reduce the risk of suicide.
- » List actionable strategies that individuals and organizations can implement to strengthen community-based suicide prevention efforts.
- » Lead or engage in local suicide prevention initiatives that educate and empower community members to support one another.

UNLOCKING CARE: PERMIACARE'S SPECIALIZED INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY/MENTAL HEALTH (IDD/MH) CLINICS

Austin 3, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CME, NCPD, LP, CPE for Accountants

This presentation highlights the critical shortage of psychiatric healthcare providers for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Despite experiencing mental illness at rates similar to the general population, persons with IDD often remain untreated due to diagnostic overshadowing. PermiaCare launched two IDD psychiatric clinics in November 2022. Insights, challenges, and successes, emphasizing the importance of tailored psychiatric care for persons with IDD will be examined.

- Pam Shurley, MA, LPA, LIDDA Director, Licensed Psychological Associate, PermiaCare
- Michelle McClellan, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, PermiaCare/Midland Memorial Hospital Clinic Manager/Private Practice
- Amanda Morpew, MSW, Service Coordination Team Leader and IDD/MH Clinic Manager, PermiaCare
- Krystal Jones, MSW, LCSW, Crisis Intervention Specialist, PermiaCare

Learning Objectives:

- » Describe unique mental health challenges that can be experienced by individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).
- » Identify challenges for IDD psychiatric providers in the behavioral healthcare system.
- » Outline the PermiaCare model for tailoring psychiatric care for individuals with IDD and co-occurring mental illness.



CONCURRENT SESSIONS

FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2025

8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

DRIVING AGENCY GROWTH THROUGH TRAINING: A CONVERSATION ON TRAINING CLINICAL STAFF

Majestic 1, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

In 2021, Metrocare launched a Mental Health Clinical Training Program focused on clinical skill development for the 300+ clinicians in Metrocare's Mental Health Division. This presentation will discuss lessons learned during this program's first three years to empower all Community Centers in Texas to effectively train clinical staff and drive agency growth. Over three years, Metrocare's clinical staff turnover has been cut in half, hundreds of staff have been trained in specialty models, and utilization of targeted evidence-based practices has increased multiple times over. This workshop will share specific strategies and offer space for innovative conversations.

- Andrew Ahles, MS, LMFT-S, Clinical Training Manager, Metrocare
- Jennifer Torres, MSW, Director of Intensive Services, Metrocare

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify training strategies to increase utilization and quality of evidence-based and trauma-informed practices..
- » Utilize data to strategically match training initiatives with agency key performance indicators (KPI).
- » Identify statewide barriers to training clinical staff and possibilities for future innovation.

EFFORTLESS INTEGRATION: ALIGNING ZERO SUICIDE WITH CCBHC CERTIFICATION

Austin 1, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants, MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP

Local Mental Health Authorities in Texas face the challenge of navigating numerous funding and regulatory requirements, while striving to provide the highest quality of care. This complexity can complicate efforts to deliver comprehensive services, particularly in addressing the high rates of suicide and mental health crises within the community. Join Integral Care, Tropical Texas Behavioral Health, MHMR of Tarrant County, and HHSC's Prevention and Behavioral Health Promotion Office for an engaging panel discussion on the successful integration of the Zero Suicide Framework into existing regulatory requirements, such as the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) model.

- Teresa Williams, MA, LPC, PMP, Director of Clinical Services, Integral Care
- Jessica Pedrick, MEd, PMP, Clinical Manager, Special Projects, Integral Care
- Leivy Resendiz, MS, CPHQ, Quality Management Manager & Zero Suicide Program Director, Tropical Texas Behavioral Health
- Juan Rios, MBA, PMPI, Program Manager 3 for Zero Suicide Initiative, The Harris Center for MH and IDD

Learning Objectives:

- » Describe how CCBHC principles align with the Zero Suicide framework.
- » Identify other funding and regulatory requirements that align with the Zero Suicide framework.
- » Apply change management principles to boost leadership and staff engagement.

ETHICS, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, AND HEALTHCARE: REAL ISSUES OR ARTIFICIAL? PART 2

Austin 2, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CME/Medical Ethics, NCPD, LP/Psychology Ethics, CPE for Accountants, LCDC

This highly interactive session will follow up on Dr. Michael Gillette's 2024 keynote on ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare. He will provide a brief review of the basic AI concepts before cataloguing the ethical challenges that this technology is likely to create when applied in a variety of healthcare environments. Discussion will involve a range of topics including, but not limited to: inherent bias, equity and access, management of data, transparency and honesty, provider and client use, and potential impacts on the nature of the provider-recipient relationship. This session is designed to assist participants in understanding how artificial intelligence (AI) can be applied in their work and alert them to the ethical advantages and challenges that the technology is likely to generate.

- Michael Gillette, PhD, Consultant, Bioethical Services of Virginia, Inc.

Learning Objectives:

- » Discuss the application of artificial intelligence (AI) to healthcare.
- » List the most relevant ethical issues that utilizing AI in healthcare is likely to produce.
- » Implement an ethical framework for assessing the appropriate and inappropriate healthcare applications of AI.

EXCELLENCE IN PEER LEADERSHIP

Austin 3, 2nd Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants, MHPS/RSPS/PSS/CFP

Building a team of peer professionals is an exciting, new experience for many Community Center programs, but may require traditional leadership styles to adapt to best support peers. How do you know when a person with diverse lived experiences is ready to use those experiences to support others as a professional? What is your role as a leader in supporting a team member's personal wellness and how do you address performance issues with empathy? What items should be monitored in supervision and where is the professional boundary held? Presenters will discuss these questions through lessons learned at The Center for Health Care Services, successes in staff development, and peer ethics.

- Erinn Graber, MA, LPC, LCDC, PSS, CFP, Peer Services Manager, The Center for Health Care Services
- Armando Sanchez, MSW, RSPS, MHPS, PSS, Peer Specialist Supervisor, The Center for Health Care Services

Learning Objectives:

- » List key strategies for hiring and developing strong peer professionals.
- » Identify early challenge indicators and learn how to respond with empathy and accountability.
- » Use techniques to have difficult conversations in a way that promotes resiliency and growth.

HITTING THE MARK WHEN BUILDING A JAIL-BASED COMPETENCY RESTORATION PROGRAM

Majestic 4/5, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

The Harris Center for MH and IDD developed Six Core Concepts needed in the creation of a successful Jail-Based Competency Restoration (JBCR) program. This interactive workshop will guide participants through the steps of JBCR program development that apply the Six Core Concepts, including the identification of key community stakeholders, funding sources, infrastructure, judicial processes, program design, and outcome data. Participants will be equipped to develop a comprehensive roadmap tailored to meet their county's needs.

- Terry Hancock, MA, LPC, NCC, Clinical Team Lead, The Harris Center for MH and IDD
- Krystin Holmes, PhD, LPC-S, LMFT-S, NCC, Program Director, The Harris Center for MH and IDD

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify and analyze the Six Core Concepts for developing a successful JBCR program.
- » Apply the knowledge gained through the presentation to a new or existing JBCR program.
- » Discuss the benefits and challenges to the development and implementation of a JBCR program.

HOW COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

D1

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants, LCDC

Mental health and substance use challenges are often compounded by barriers to accessing care. To help address these barriers, Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) funds the Community Health Worker (CHW) program through the Substance Use Prevention Treatment and Recovery Services block grant. CHWs bridge gaps between behavioral health systems and underserved populations. CHWs also effectively address barriers to care, such as stigma, lack of resources, and logistical difficulties. This session will provide an overview of CHW services in Texas and a panel discussion with program directors from rural and urban CHW programs.

- Justin McClenny, LCDC, Intervention Specialist, HHSC
- Tracy Harris, CCHW, LCDC-I, Program Manager, MHMR of Tarrant County
- Desiree Fanner, CCHW, Certified Community Health Worker, MHMR of Tarrant County
- Mandy Schuman, CHW, RSPS, CPS, CTSS, Community Health Worker Team Lead, Betty Hardwick Center
- Jamie Wallace, CHW, Community Health Worker, Betty Hardwick Center
- Adrian Maynez, CHW, Community Health Worker, Emergence Health Network
- Cynthia Monzon, CHW, RSPS, Community Health Worker, Emergence Health Network

Learning Objectives:

- » Explain how CHWs can be utilized to address barriers and improve engagement to behavioral health services.
- » Define differences in providing CHW services in rural and urban communities.
- » Identify ways to implement CHW services in your own Community Center.



CONCURRENT SESSIONS

FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2025 | 8:30 - 10:00 A.M.

SAVING THE LIVES OF OUR MOST ACUTE CLIENTS: INCLUDING CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAMS (CIT) IN ASSERTIVE COMMUNITY TREATMENT (ACT) TEAM MEETINGS

Majestic 6/7, 37th Floor

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CPE for Accountants

Many law enforcement agencies across the nation are requiring their officers to attend a 40-hour crisis intervention team (CIT) course preparing for mental health encounters. Despite this training, challenges persist in managing acute mental health situations, often resulting in adverse outcomes for individuals in crisis. This presentation will explore case law, local case studies involving CIT and police, and how to work with your CIT to save your clients' lives. It will specifically target the effectiveness of a strong collaboration between CIT and Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams to effectively address mental health crises for the most acute population.

- Rhonda Russ, MA, LPC-S, Chief of Crisis Intervention, Emergence Health Network
- Denisse Cabral, MPA, Director of Crisis Continuum, Emergence Health Network

Learning Objectives:

- » List three ways in which CIT or mental health-trained officers can assist with safety and the de-escalation of acute clients.
- » Collaborate with ACT teams to enhance support for individuals in acute mental health crises, ensuring a more coordinated and comprehensive response.
- » Explain the benefits of CIT and ACT collaboration, outline best practices for integrating team efforts, and discuss strategies for overcoming barriers to effective partnership.

STATE BUDGET AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

D2/D3

Available Credits: LPC/LMFT/SW, CLE, CPE for Accountants, LCDC

Of particular interest to Trustees and Chief Executive Officers/Executive Directors, Management and Communications Staff.

Presenters will discuss the current legislative landscape following the 89th Legislative Session, including new laws that impact or have the potential to impact the Community Center system. This presentation will also feature perspectives on current and future state budget outlooks.

- Lee Johnson, MPA, Chief Executive Officer, Texas Council of Community Centers
- Kelsey Bernstein, Chief of Government Relations, Texas Council of Community Centers
- Eva DeLuna Castro, Senior Budget Analyst and Policy Advisor, Office of State Representative Donna Howard

Learning Objectives:

- » Identify new state laws impacting the delivery of healthcare, special populations, and the Community Center system.
- » Discuss the impact of these laws on Medicaid and indigent care programs and Community Center resources and operations.
- » Describe additional legal requirements and constraints created by the state budget and corresponding riders.

FRANK M. ADAMS AWARDS

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Thursday General Session | June 26, 2025 | Begins at 8:30 a.m.



The Frank M. Adams Outstanding Volunteer Service Award was established in 1990 in honor of the late Frank M. Adams, a founding member of the Texas Council of Community Centers.

The FMA Award is presented in four categories: Individual, Community, Media, and Board Service. The award recognizes a level of volunteerism that is representative of long-term commitment, is exceptional and far-reaching in scope, diversified in effort, and worthy of statewide recognition.

In 2021, the Gladdie Fowler Award for Outstanding Board Service was added in memory of Ms. Gladdie Fowler, who served the Spindletop Board of Trustees for 35 years and was a longstanding member of the Texas Council Board of Directors.

Nominees

Individual

Cookie Joe Arthur
Nominated by Texana Center

Media

Shaley Kidwell, KCBD-TV
Nominated by StarCare Specialty Health System

Gladdie Fowler Board Service

Margaret "Margie" Morris
Nominated by Texoma Community Center

Daniel Barrett
Nominated by The Center for Health Care Services

2025 FMA Awards Selection Panel

Roxanne Nelson, Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
Drue Farmer, StarCare Specialty Health System
Chris Dillard, Betty Hardwick Center
JoAnne Harwood, StarCare Specialty Health System
Jessica Dodds, Gulf Bend Center
Rene Hurtado, Emergence Health Network

FRANK M. ADAMS AWARDS

INDIVIDUAL AWARD



Cookie Joe Arthur

Cookie Joe has been an invaluable volunteer at the Texana Center for Advancement, a program designed to help young people and adults clear the path forward in life and prepare for employment and independence by supporting them in learning tools such as social skills, vocational skills, community engagement, and self-advocacy. As a lifelong professional dancer, choreographer, and teacher, Cookie Joe generously dedicates her time and expertise at the Texana Center for Advancement by teaching dance to participants in the program.

In the summer of 2022, Cookie Joe and her students began volunteering to teach a weekly dance class at Texana Center for adults with intellectual disabilities or autism. The class was a success, bringing joy and new leisure skills to participants and observers alike. The summer program concluded with a recital at Cookie Joe's Dancin' School.

Due to its success, the class continued into the fall of 2022 and is ongoing. It has since expanded to include both adult and children's classes. Cookie Joe also developed a program to train some adult participants as instructors for the children's classes. Given the program's popularity and impact, these classes are expected to continue indefinitely.

Beyond volunteering, Cookie Joe has helped raise funds and secure donations to support Texana Center. She is also a member of the Exchange Club of Sugar Land, which has contributed annually to Texana Center since 2010.

Her passion for dance is evident in the way she engages both adults and children, creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere where everyone feels encouraged to participate and learn. She considers this work among the most fulfilling of her life. "It allows and encourages these children to express themselves—many for the first time. Dance creates confidence and individuality and promotes teamwork and bonding. Everyone joins in, and everyone benefits from the experience," she says.

Cookie Joe's commitment to fostering an environment where social skills and self-confidence can grow through dance has had a lasting impact on our community. She not only teaches dance techniques but also shows our students how movement can be a powerful tool for communication and personal expression. Her work goes beyond the classroom as she inspires our staff with her dedication, enthusiasm, and advocacy for every individual with whom she works.

We are deeply grateful for Cookie's continued support and for the positive influence she has had on our Community Center. Her work exemplifies the power of volunteerism and the lasting difference one person can make in the lives of others.

MEDIA AWARD



Shaley Kidwell, KCBD News Channel 11

StarCare Specialty Health System proudly recognizes Shaley Kidwell as the recipient of the Frank M. Adams Media Award, honoring her exceptional “KCBD Investigates” series on mental health in the Lubbock area. Through powerful storytelling and tenacious reporting, Ms. Kidwell has helped reshape the conversation surrounding mental health in our region, elevating awareness, reducing stigma, and encouraging community action.

In her investigative series, Ms. Kidwell approached a complex and often misunderstood topic with compassion, integrity, and a deep sense of responsibility to the people of Lubbock. Her reporting highlighted the lived experiences of individuals navigating mental health challenges, the perspectives of caregivers and healthcare providers, and the availability of crucial resources. By shining a light on these personal stories, she created a platform for education, empathy, and hope.

Ms. Kidwell addressed some of the most pressing mental health issues facing our community, including the difficulties families face when loved ones refuse help, and the need for specialized crisis response. Her coverage of the Lubbock County Sheriff’s request for mental health deputies, modeled after the successful Mental Health Officer initiative between Lubbock Police Department and StarCare, highlighted an innovative and collaborative solution to a longstanding challenge. Her reporting informed the public and inspired conversations among local leaders and decision-makers.

More than just news, Ms. Kidwell’s work has served as a catalyst for change. She has amplified the voices of those too often unheard, helping to advance mental health as a shared community priority. Her dedication to accurate, heartfelt journalism aligns with the spirit of this award, recognizing those in the media who go above and beyond to make a meaningful impact.

StarCare celebrates Ms. Kidwell’s outstanding contribution to mental health advocacy through journalism. Her work continues to inspire greater understanding, stronger partnerships, and a more compassionate Lubbock.

FRANK M. ADAMS AWARDS

GLADDIE FOWLER BOARD SERVICE AWARD



Margaret "Margie" Morris

Margie Morris exemplifies the spirit of dedicated service—to her profession, her community, and the vulnerable individuals in Texas who often can't speak for themselves. For more than 26 years, Margie was a powerful presence at Texoma Community Center (TCC), LifePath Systems, Texas Council of Community Centers, and across her broader community, wholeheartedly advocating for individuals with mental health challenges and intellectual and developmental disabilities. She has generously lent her exceptional talents—marked by creativity, eloquence, and infused with heart—with TCC, the Texas Council, and her beloved community at large.

Margie's deep-rooted community involvement spans Sherman, Denison, McKinney, and the state of Texas. She has served on numerous boards and committees that promote positive development, community prosperity, and raising awareness for vulnerable populations. She joined the Texoma Community

Center Board in September 1998. Within two years, she was also representing the organization at the Texas Council of Community Centers, eventually serving as Texas Council Board Chair for fiscal year 2009. Prior to her board service at Texoma Community Center, she held leadership roles as Chief Executive Officer for United Way and Director of Community Relations at LifePath Systems.

In September 2024, Margie retired from both the TCC Board and the Texas Council Board, closing an extraordinary chapter of more than two decades of strength, leadership and dedication. Texoma Community Center was sustained by her thoughtful insights, strong advocacy and integrity to stand up for what was right.

Margie holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Advertising, Public Relations, and Marketing from Texas A&M University, where she was honored as a prestigious Regents' Scholar. In 2004, she founded the Morris Ink Advertising Agency, bringing her stellar communication skills to nonprofit organizations and companies throughout North Texas. Her work has been recognized in multiple published articles about her outstanding contributions to her field and her community.

Margie's passion for the Community Center system staff and the individuals they serve is evidence of her commitment to what is good in this world. She once stated she has worked alongside "those who, like me, simply saw the need to stand up, learn all we could, and engage for those whose voices are marginalized." Never one to take credit for her own tireless, freely given, hard work, she states: "I have seen the most intelligent, hard-working, deeply caring professionals work long hours, educate with passion, and fight endless battles for the dignity and care and respect that not only our clients, but those caring for them – within the system and within the justice system and within the home – deserve."

The staff and Board of Trustees at Texoma Community Center hold the deepest respect and gratitude for having served alongside such a sincere, giving, gifted colleague as Margie Morris.

PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS

1991

Individual: Judge C. L. Abernethy (Central Plains MHMR Center)
Media: Abilene Reporter News (Abilene Regional MHMR Center)
Community: Tanglefoot Extension Homemakers (Central Counties Center for MHMR Services)

1992

Individual: Betty Hardwick (Abilene Regional MHMR Center)
Media: KLBK-13 Television (Lubbock Regional MHMR Center)
Community: No Nomination

1993

Individual: Jodie E. Stavino (Rice Land Regional Mental Health Authority)
Media: Galveston County Daily News (The Gulf Coast Center)
Community: Methodist Hospital School of Nursing (Lubbock Regional MHMR Center)

1994

Individual: Felice S. Klein (MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley)
Media: KTAB-TV (Abilene Regional MHMR Center)
Community: No Nomination

1995

Individual: Charley H. Shannon, PhD (MHMR Services for the Concho Valley)
Media: Denison Herald (MHMR Services of Texoma)
Community: Gatesville Community Volunteers (Central Counties Center for MHMR Services)

1996

Individual: Suzanne Lasko (Tarrant County MHMR Services)
Media: KFXK Fox 51, Longview (Sabine Valley Center)
Community: Troy 4-H Club (Central Counties Center for MHMR Services)

1997

Individual: Norma Henry (The Center for Health Care Services & San Antonio Alliance for the Mentally Ill)
Media: Leslie Sowers, The Houston Chronicle (MHMR Authority of Harris County)
Community: United Service Club, Denison High School (MHMR Services of Texoma)

1998

Individual: Helen Dishongh (Tri-County MHMR Services)
Media: KXII Broadcasters, Inc. (MHMR Services of Texoma)
Community: Lufkin Alliance for the Mentally Ill (Burke Center)

1999

Individual: Mary Lou Caldwell (The Gulf Coast Center)
Media: Bonham Daily Favorite (MHMR Services of Texoma)
Community: South Liberty State Center Advisory Board (Tri-County MHMR Services)

2000

Individual: Donald L. Dumas (Austin Travis County MHMR Center)
Media: Herald Democrat (MHMR Services of Texoma)
Community: Llano Crawfish Open, Inc. (Hill Country Community MHMR Center)

2001

Individual: William E. Hall, Jr. (Tri-County MHMR Services)
Media: Fort Worth Star-Telegram (MHMR of Tarrant County)
Community: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Sherman (MHMR Services of Texoma)

2002

Individual: Frank K. Collins (Spindletop MHMR Services)
Media: Eastland/Callahan County Newspaper Network (Central Texas MHMR Center)
Community: Fayette County Commission for the Mentally Retarded (Bluebonnet Trails Community MHMR Center)

2003

Individual: Genevieve Tarlton Hearon (Austin Travis County MHMR Center)
Media: The Galveston Daily News (The Gulf Coast Center)
Community: Longview AMBUCS (Sabine Valley Center)

2004

Individual: Blanche Ridley (Tri-County MHMR Services)
Media: San Antonio Express News (The Center for Health Care Services)
Community: San Antonio Police Officers Association (The Center for Health Care Services)

2005

Individual: Robert Jimenez (The Center for Health Care Services)
Media: Corpus Christi Caller-Times (MHMR Center of Nueces County)
Community: Brown McCarroll, LLP (Austin Travis County MHMR Center)

2006

Individual: Hartley Sappington (Bluebonnet Trails Community MHMR Center)
Media: Howard County ARC (West Texas Centers for MHMR)
Community: Melissa McEver (Tropical Texas Center for MHMR)

2007

Individual: Beth Holt (Community Healthcare)
Media: Trenton Tribune (MHMR Services of Texoma)
Community: First Baptist Church of Conroe (Tri-County MHMR Services)

2008

Individual: Jamie Travis (The Gulf Coast Center)
Media: Gainesville Daily Register (MHMR Services of Texoma)
Community: Tarrant/Dallas County Toy Run Board of Directors (MHMR of Tarrant County & Metrocare Services)

2009

Individual: George Hernandez (The Center for Health Care Services)
Media: Mike Henry - KBST News (West Texas Centers for MHMR)
Community: Mayor's Mental Health Task Force Monitoring Committee (Austin Travis County MHMR Center)

2010

Individual: Karen M. Garber (MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley)
Media: The Van Alstyne Leader (MHMR Services of Texoma)
Community: The Arc of Greater Beaumont (Spindletop Center)

2011

Individual: Mary Ernestine Butler (Texana Center)
Media: Victoria Advocate (Gulf Bend Center)
Community: Alcoa Fastening Systems (Heart of Texas Behavioral Health Network)

2012

Individual: Barbara Duren (Tri-County Services)
Media: Karin McCay - KCBD News (StarCare Specialty Health System)
Community: The Rural East Texas Health Network (Burke Center)

2013

Individual: Eileen McDowell "The Art Lady" (Texana Center)
Media: North Texas e-News (Texoma Community Center)
Community: The Marc Center (Central Counties Services)

2014

Individual: Stephanie Contreras (Tropical Texas Behavioral Health)
Media: Joe Pollaro (Texoma Community Center)
Community: Mental Health Connection of Tarrant County (MHMR of Tarrant County)

2015

Individual: Judge Polly Spencer (The Center for Health Care Services)
Media: KTen News (Texoma Community Center)
Community: Legacy Ford (Texana Center)

2016

Individual: Harold Wright (Texoma Community Center)
Media: Midland Reporter-Telegram (Permian Basin Community Centers)
Community: Abilene Christian School (Betty Hardwick Center)

2017

Individual: Marjorie "Ms. B" Boniface Balz (Central Counties Services)
Media: KTRE-TV (Burke)
Community: Lubbock County Sheriff's Department (StarCare Specialty Health System)

2018

Individual: Jacqueline "Jackie" Shannon (MHMR Services for the Concho Valley)
Media: NBC 5 (Metrocare Services)
Community: VFW Post 3278 (Metrocare Services)

2019

Individual: Colonel Howard Daniel, Jr. (Burke)
Media: Nicole Hickl, KGBT-TV CBS 4 News (Tropical Texas Behavioral Health)
Community: Grace Creek Church (Community Healthcare)

2020

Individual: Dianne Hickey (StarCare Specialty Health System)
Media: KMHT Radio 103.9 (Community Healthcare)
Community: Some Other Place (Spindletop Center)

2021

Individual: Wendy Perrott (LifePath Systems)
Media: Shrink Box Podcast (Tropical Texas Behavioral Health)
Community: UTEP Collegiate Services - Ric Romero (Emergence Health Network)
Board: Brian Shannon (StarCare Specialty Health System)

2022

Community: Binky Patrol (LifePath Systems)
Board: Jill Martinez (Metrocare Services)

2023

Individual: Shawn Barnes (Nueces Center for MHID)
Community: Chula Chasers (MHMR of Tarrant County)
Board: Margaret Jones (PermianCare)

2024

Individual: Deborah Tomai (Tropical Texas Behavioral Health)
Media: Avery Martinez, KVIA-TV (Emergence Health Network)
Community: Morton Salt (Andrews Center)
Board: Dr. Rick Crawford (LifePath Systems)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Texas Council of Community Centers Public Information, Education, and Training Committee

Dr. Linda Holloway - Chair
Denton County MHMR Center

Cary Houston
MHMR Concho Valley

Elijah Anderson
Betty Hardwick Center

Frank Coffin
Spindletop Center

Kenneth Bernstein
Metrocare

Larry Adams
Texas Panhandle Centers

Shane Britton
Center for Life Resources

Texas Council of Community Centers 38th Annual Conference Planning Committee

Brent Worthen, PhD
Texana Center

Carrie Parks
Metrocare

Heather Champion
Spindletop Center

Jasmine Brown
Metrocare

Kevin Barker
Texana Center

Mark Janes, MD
Bluebonnet Trails Community
Services

Martha Sanderford-Smith,
MSN, RN, QMHP-CS
MHMR of Tarrant County

Randa Haywood
Andrews Center

Regina Walker
Metrocare

Rusty Taylor
Integral Care

Sean Mantey, LPC, LCDC
MHMR of Tarrant County

Maria Rios
Texas Council of Community Centers

Jacquelin Wang
Texas Council of Community Centers

Pat Holder
Professional Event Services

Metrocare 38th Annual Conference Host Center Committee

Tameka Cass
Chief Philanthropy and
Diversity Officer

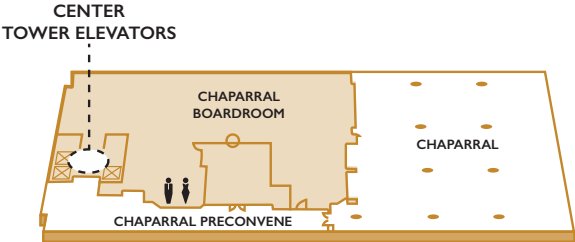
Tate Ringer
Chief Strategy Officer

Raquel Orozco
Philanthropy Associate

NOTES

FLOOR PLANS

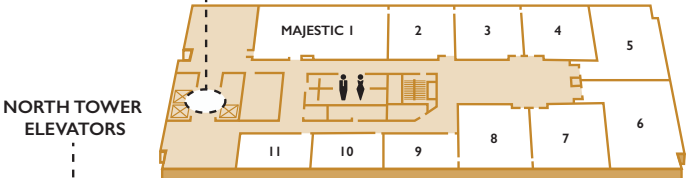
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38TH FLOOR



FLOOR 38

Chaparral

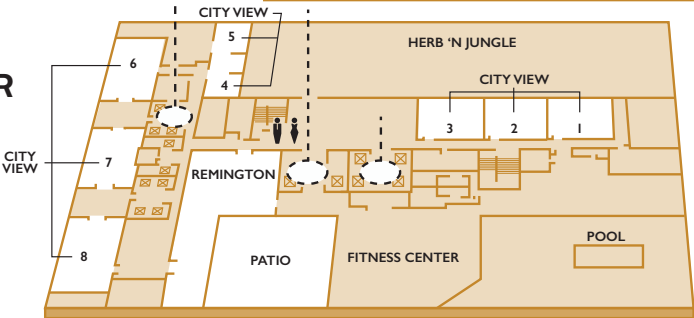
HOTEL
37TH FLOOR



FLOOR 37

Majestic 1
Majestic 4/5
Majestic 6/7

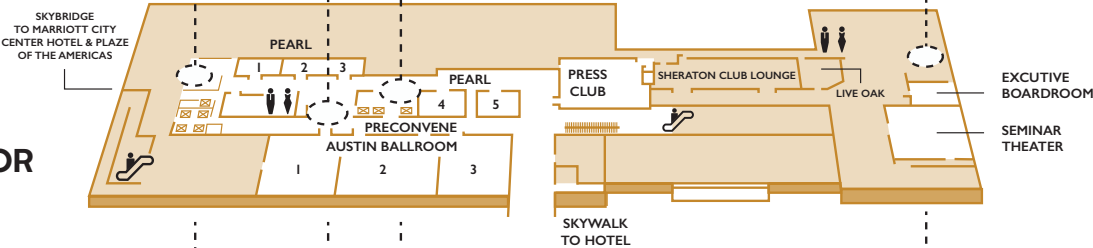
HOTEL
4TH FLOOR



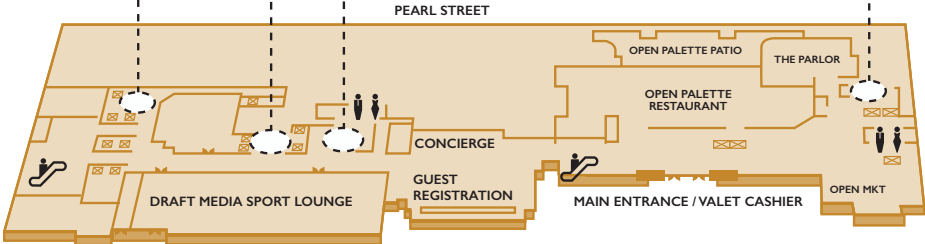
FLOOR 2

Austin 1
Austin 2
Austin 3

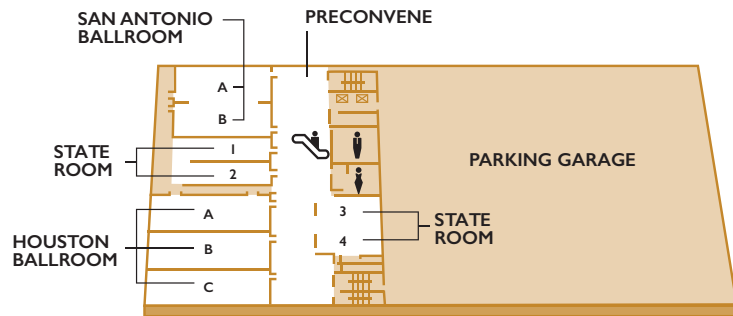
HOTEL
2ND FLOOR



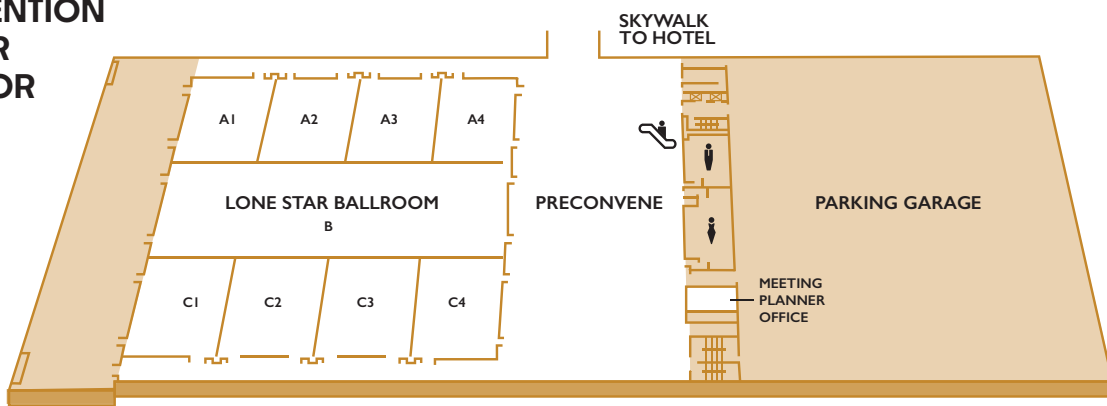
HOTEL
1ST FLOOR



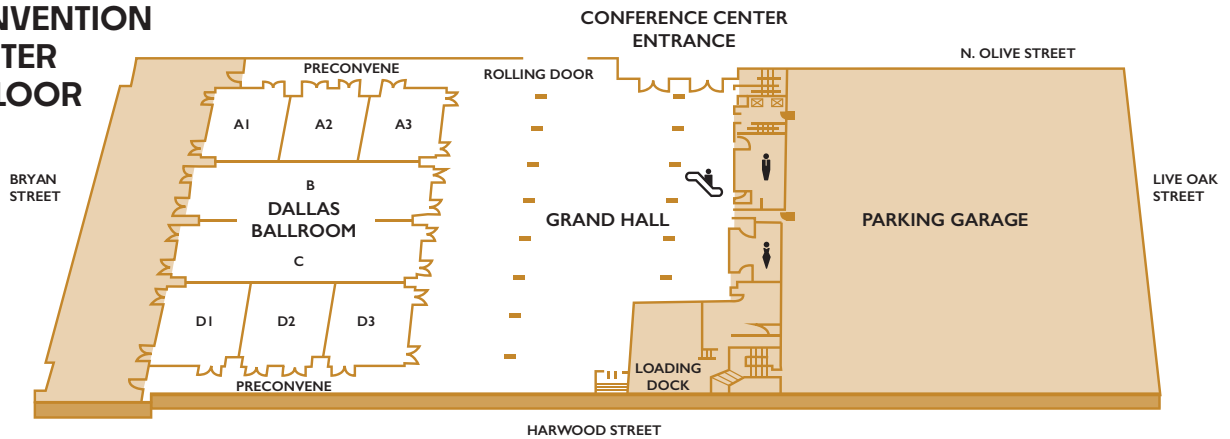
CONVENTION CENTER 3RD FLOOR



CONVENTION CENTER 2ND FLOOR



CONVENTION CENTER 1ST FLOOR



FLOOR 1

Dallas Ballroom (ABC)
Grand Hall
D1
D2/D3



Gave the date!

39th Annual Texas Council Conference
Grand Hyatt San Antonio

June 10-12, 2026
See you in San Antonio in 2026!
