

American Council for School Social Work  
*Annual National School Social Work Practice Institute*

A VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE — JOIN FROM ANYWHERE!

# Building Trauma-informed Schools & Communities

February 1-2, 2021

&

# Post-Institute Training: Suicide Risk & Assessment

February 3, 2021



[Information/Registration  
acsswconference@gmail.com](mailto:acsswconference@gmail.com)



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2021 National Virtual School Social Work Institute

**Building Trauma-Informed  
Schools & Communities**

February 1-3, 2021

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## INSTITUTE SCHEDULE – Pacific Time

### Monday, February 1

- 8:00 - 8:30 Welcome &  
Recognition of Sally Carlson, MSSW
- 8:30 - 9:30 Keynote Address
- 9:30 - 9:45 Break
- 9:45 -11:15 Workshop
- 11:15 -11:30 Break
- 11:30 - 1:00 Workshop
- 1:00 - 1:45 Lunch break panel
- 1:45 - 3:15 Workshop
- 3:15 - 3:30 Closing



### Tuesday, February 2

- 8:00 - 8:15 Welcome
- 8:15 - 8:30 Break
- 8:30 - 9:30 Keynote Address
- 9:30 - 9:45 Break
- 9:45 -11:15 Workshop
- 11:15 -11:30 Break
- 11:30 - 1:00 Workshop
- 1:00 - 1:45 Lunch break panel
- 1:45 - 3:15 Workshop
- 3:15 - 3:30 Closing



[KEYNOTES](#)

[PRESENTERS](#)

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### Wednesday, February 3

- 8:30 - 3:30 Post-Institute Training  
(Includes 1 hr lunch break)

# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

***Monday, February 1, 2021***

***Keynote Speaker***



[Kris Mohandie, PhD, ABPP](#)

*The Covid-19 Pandemic: A Worldwide Catastrophic Event and Global Reset*

This presentation/keynote address will address the psychological and general fallout from the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Mental health workers, and society alike, have been faced with a worldwide catastrophic event unlike any other. Contextually, this has created and exacerbated trauma on a massive scale. It is critical to identify the myriad of variables impacting the well-being of those we serve, and the complicated context in which services are delivered by caregivers who themselves are impacted. Unique characteristics of these traumas and related variables will be discussed, including the nature of biohazard threat, interpersonal isolation and alienation, direct and vicarious traumatization, developmental derailment, and economic and systemic disruption and loss. However, within this worldwide disaster, the positive opportunities for global reset will be identified, including opportunities for enhanced human connection, and to address long-ignored health, economic, and systemic variables affecting global well-being.

## Bio

Dr. Kris Mohandie is a clinical, police, and forensic psychologist with over thirty years of experience in the assessment and management of violent behavior. He has extensive experience in the arena of human and natural trauma. He is licensed as a psychologist in several states including California, Alaska, New York, Nevada, and Utah. He is Board

Certified by the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP) in Police and Public Safety Psychology.

He has consulted in field responses and case investigations for local, state, and federal law enforcement organizations including LAPD's Threat Management Unit, SWAT/Crisis Negotiation Team, and the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Program. He responded on-scene to the O.J. Simpson barricade and the North Hollywood Bank Robbery Shootout. Dr. Mohandie has consulted to, and testified in numerous extreme violence and homicide cases, including single, mass, and serial homicide cases. Dr. Mohandie, along with several others, has participated in two scientific studies of mass murder, including those perpetrated by adults and adolescents. He has several coauthored chapters which appear in the 2014 book, *International Handbook of Threat Assessment*.

Dr. Mohandie has conducted extensive trial pending and prison interviews of violent offenders, including a number of stalkers, hostage takers, workplace and school violence perpetrators, serial, and multiple murderers.

Dr. Mohandie's work has been featured in the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, and *LA Times*, and he has appeared in the news programs of CNN, ABC, CBS, NBC, BBC, and Fox, as well as programs on *Investigative Discovery*, *A&E*, *History*, and the *Discovery Channel*. He was the host and a producer on the *Investigative Discovery* show, *Most Evil*, and the 2018 series *Breaking Homicide*. His true crime book, *Evil Thoughts: Wicked Deeds* was released November 5, 2019.

He regularly consults on matters of risk and threat management to the private and public sector, including the entertainment industry.

***Tuesday, February 2, 2021***

***Keynote Speaker***

**[Audra Langley, PhD](#)**

***Working Together to Create  
Trauma-Responsive and  
Resilience Building Schools***



This presentation is intended to elevate understanding of childhood trauma, its prevalence and potential impact on children’s brain development, learning, and emotional wellbeing. It will include discussion of what a culturally-responsive, trauma and resiliency informed lens can look like in schools with an introduction to concrete trauma sensitive strategies for educators and school-based trauma interventions for mental health providers.

## **Bio**

Audra Langley, Ph.D., is the Director of Training for the LAUSD/UCLA/RAND Trauma Services Adaptation Center for Schools and is chair of the NCTSN Trauma Services Adaptation Center for Resiliency, Hope and Wellness in Schools. She is a professor at the UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior and UCLA Department of Pediatrics. Dr. Langley’s body of work has sought to increase access to quality mental health interventions for underserved populations of children, including those in schools and involved with the child welfare system. She is also Director of UCLA TIES for Families, an innovative interdisciplinary program for children in foster care or adopted through foster care (ages birth to 21) and their families in Los Angeles County. Dr. Langley works in close partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services and Department of Mental Health to optimize development and reduce barriers to permanency

for children in foster care. She is the Co-Director of the UCLA Pritzker Center for Strengthening Children and Families.

Dr. Langley is a researcher and clinician who specializes in cognitive behavioral treatment for children and adolescents with PTSD, anxiety, and related disorders, and her work seeks to make evidence-based interventions available to all children in accessible settings, such as schools. She received her Ph.D. in Clinical Child Psychology from Virginia Tech and went on to specialize in CBT with children and adolescents during her internship at the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute. She was the recipient of an NIMH-funded National Research Service Award to further her postdoctoral research training in the clinical evaluation of evidence-based treatments for childhood anxiety disorders through the UCLA Child OCD, Anxiety, and Tic Disorders Program, where she continues as a faculty member. Dr. Langley has served as investigator, trainer, clinician, and clinical supervisor on several clinic and school-based studies and trials treating ethnically and socioeconomically diverse children and adolescents with PTSD, anxiety, and OCD and has presented and published research papers on her work.

Nationally and locally, Dr. Langley provides training and consultation related to trauma and resiliency-informed care. She is the author of five treatment programs, including Bounce Back: Elementary School Intervention for Childhood Trauma, Support for Students Exposed to Trauma (SSET), ADAPT: Adoption-Specific Therapy to Help Adopted Children and their Families Thrive, and the recently released 2nd version of Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS).

***Wednesday, February 3, 2021***

***Post-Institute Presenter***

***Suicide & Risk Assessment***

[Estela Andujo, PhD](#)

**Dr. Estela Andujo** is a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Southern California, Suzanne Dworak- Peck, School of Social Work. She is a member of the USC Children Youth and Family Department where she teaches behavioral mental health theory and clinical practice courses. Dr. Andujo is a widely recognized expert and trainer on child and family psychotherapy and regularly speaks, coaches, and trains on topics related to clinical practice such as DSM 5, Clinical Supervision, LCSW Licensure, Law & Ethics, Gender & Gender Nonconforming Children and Trauma-informed Practices via the use of Sensory based techniques. She has expertise in integrating expressive arts and play therapy with children, adolescents and their families in clinical settings.



Dr. Andujo maintains a clinical affiliation with varied mental health facilities in Los Angeles county, having worked in a variety of capacities with children, adolescents and their families involved in the mental health system, as clinical therapist, clinical supervisor and clinical program director. Dr. Andujo's clinical work and research has focused on mental health challenges and clinical practice with children, adolescents and their families.

As a Faculty Mentor, Dr. Andujo provides professional supervision for Social Work Students/Interns in their role as Navigators in the Multidisciplinary Stop Diabetes in its Tracks program in Pomona. In that capacity she participates as a member of the Navigation Task Force assisting with planning and coordination of the project.

# Post-Institute Suicide Prevention Training

February 3, 2021

8:30 - 3:30 PT / 11:30 - 6:30 ET (1 hr lunch break)

[REGISTER](#) -- *Limited to 40*

## ***Suicide Risk & Assessment***

***Meets CA state requirements.***

This training looks at suicide risk assessment and prevention in clinical practice with children and adolescents. The training will review current research on the standard of care for assessing suicide, suicide prevention, and intervention focusing on high-risk populations with consideration and inclusion of gender, race, ethnicity, and age factors. Evidenced Based practices effective at reducing suicide such as safety plans, cognitive/behavioral therapy and narratives will be explored as viable options for intervention with high risk populations. The effects of working with a suicidal client upon the therapist will also be addressed.

### **Outline**

- Research and suicide
- Assessment
- Intervention
- Legal Mandates

### **Objectives**

1. Identify 4 risk factors for suicide in children and adolescents.
2. Identify examples of intervention strategies for high risk suicidal clients.
3. List 4 critical factors to include in a suicide risk assessment with adolescents.
4. Identify the components of the standard of care in suicide risk assessment.

**This training meets the new mandatory 6-CEU requirement from the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) for Suicide Risk Assessment and Intervention training for:**

1. LCSWs, LMFTs, and LPCCs renewing their license on or after January 1, 2021.
2. Associates applying for their LCSW, LMFT or LPCC on or after January 1, 2021

# WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

## 2021 ACSSW National School Social Work Institute

[Click to register](#)

**FEBRUARY 1, 2021**

### **1A1 Healing Centered Expressive Practices for Children and Families Impacted by Trauma**

Estela Andujo, PhD, LCSW; Michal Sela-Amit, PhD

Trauma may have detrimental consequences in the lives of children, youth, and families. It has both short and long-term impacts on physical as well as mental health. It often interferes not only with emotional and cognitive processing and learning, but also with the ability to fully thrive and enjoy wellness. Trauma care is the first necessary step to ensure the restoration of health, but trauma care alone is not enough to fully achieve well-being. Clients are more than their traumas, and thriving is more than being trauma-free. This workshop will demonstrate the use of integrative methods that social workers in schools can use to assist in sensory integration and trauma recovery as well as move beyond it toward a full articulation of their strengths.

### **1A2 Building a School Wide SEL Program to Support Students with Trauma**

Marina Badillo, LCSW, DSW Candidate

This presentation focuses on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Program implementation for school social workers (primary, middle, and high school) using a case example of an urban alternative charter high school. Research on trauma and SEL will be reviewed to understand how SEL programming can support students who are at risk. Program implementation theory to develop high quality SEL programming for schools will be examined. Lastly, organization structure, stakeholders, advocacy, data gathering, and sustainability will be discussed. Handouts will be provided.

### **1A3 Changing the Narrative: From Criminals to Scholars**

Amandla Daniels, MSW, SSW; Bekki Crowley, MEd

This workshop will provide an overview of the cultural shift that occurred at the Vel R. Phillips School, located within Milwaukee County's Juvenile Justice Facility, resulting in a reduction of behavioral issues, improvement in the educational setting, and retention of teaching staff through the use of trauma-sensitive practices. Learn about the techniques and tools that were

implemented to achieve 23% fewer behavioral incidents and an increased retention of teaching staff from 70% to 87%.

### **1A4 Practical Strategies for Regulating Students' Brains**

Joshua MacNeill, MEd; Kathy Van Horn, Licensed Psychologist, MEd

Knowing your students are impacted by trauma is only step one. It is more important to know what to do. This session will cover interventions such as brain breaks, fidgets, student curriculum, and service dogs. We will share how we transformed four schools to meet the needs of struggling students. Whether you are an academic, clinical, or administrative staff, you will leave with tangible interventions you can implement immediately.

Additionally, we will provide basic information about each brain region along with different interventions that work specifically for that region. By choosing appropriate interventions, targeted at the brain region your students are operating from, you will observe many more short-term successes, and begin paving the way for long-term healing.

### **1B1 Creativity for Community: Using a Trauma-Informed Model of Arts to Enhance Your Social Work Practice**

Mandy Goodwin, MSW, LCSW

Arts are a powerful tool in promoting community and school culture. Arts enhance lessons in individual and small groups, while building rapport and cohesion. In this presentation, participants will be familiarized with art projects for different populations and how to utilize them within the school setting. Participants will learn what it means to follow a trauma-informed model in application and will receive a large packet of detailed projects, supplies, and instructions. Participants will take part in their own collaborative arts project.

### **1B2 The Self-Care Paradox: Taking Care of Yourself Is the First Step in Taking Care of Others**

Erica Warshawer, MSW, LCSW

Has the Pandemic Life spread you too thin? Are you feeling unsuccessful and worn out across all of your personal and professional roles? Has your self-care been deprioritized due to the demands of work and life making self-care seem like an impossible task right now? In this session, we will collectively pause to mindfully reground ourselves and reconnect with who we are at our core and why we do the work we do. Using trauma-informed and equity lenses, we will assess the impact of the past year on our brain function, our day to day lives, our narratives about self-care and draft a personalized self-care road map for supporting your quality of life in this "new world."

### **1B3 Last on the List? Deepening Your Awareness and Enhancing Your Wellness Using Self-Coaching Strategies**

Amy Nelson, MSSW, CAPSW

As you know, school social workers are rarely drawn to wellness breakouts (the past me included!). We take care of others and often forget about ourselves. Through exploring our values and thoughts, including those that sabotage our wellness, participants will learn strategies to use on their own self-care journey. Fully honoring our values and beliefs brings fulfillment and gives us energy. Enter our inner saboteur, with thoughts that deliberately damage and destroy our confidence, hope, and resilience. Through fully exploring this saboteur, participants shine a light on the dissonant voices within and begin to develop self-coaching strategies that honor their values and improve their wellness.

### **1B4 Professional Resilience for Social Workers—What, How, and Why**

Alejandra Acuña, PhD, LCSW, PPSC

Although burnout, depression, PTSD, and secondary traumatic stress rates are elevated among social workers, social workers also report resilience, vicarious resilience, vicarious post-traumatic growth, and high compassion satisfaction. Findings from a recent survey of social work field instructors (N=110) will be presented as well as theoretical (transactional analysis) and empirically supported strategies for practitioners and organizations.

### **Monday Lunch Panel - Barriers to and Facilitators for Equity in the Time of COVID**

Tamir D. Harper, BA in process; Stuart Warshawer, MEd, BA

Panelists will share their perspectives on barriers and facilitators to equitable education that students and families are facing during COVID. In addition to their observations about student experiences, panelists will offer insight into their own practices or other approaches to meeting some of the challenges associated with ensuring equity during COVID-19.

### **1C1 Lawndale Elementary School District's Trauma-Informed Approach to Promote a Collaborative Culture for Student Mental Health**

Maria Ruelas, EdD, MSW, PPSC; Martika Tucker, ACSW, PPSC; Evelyn Garcia, LCSW, PPSC

This presentation will address the use of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) to focus on trauma-informed practices in school settings. Participants will develop the skills to shift perspectives through professional development for all staff (i.e., certificated and classified staff). In addition, participants will learn how to realize the prevalence of trauma and recognize the impact trauma has on developmental behavior through an interactive presentation. Participants will also learn strategies to respond to behaviors while utilizing vignettes to apply a trauma-informed lens. After this presentation, participants will learn effective strategies to restore relationships with students.

### **1C2 Supporting Military Students Before, During and After Deployment**

Brandi L. Conrad, DSW, LCSW-BACS; Jahanna Bailey, DSW, LCSW-BACS

The academic and mental health needs of military students can be overlooked. Schools can help military students thrive by providing specialized support, especially during a time of transition or deployment. This workshop will introduce participants to the basic information needed to assist military students before, during, and after deployment. Participants will learn about interventions and strategies to best support the academic and social-emotional needs of military students.

### **1C3 Secondary Traumatic Stress: A Review of an on-line Learning Curriculum for Schools**

Steve Hydon, EdD, MSW

This presentation will explore concepts of secondary traumatic stress (STS) through the use of an on-line five module curriculum that helps users identify risk factors for STS, impact of STS and self-care techniques designed to mitigate STS symptoms.

### **1C4 Racial Injustice in Schools: Underscoring Social Work's Obligation to Promote Anti-racist Practice**

Jandel Crutchfield. PhD. LCSW

Children of color (COC) continue to have a range of disparate educational experiences that implicate structural and institutional racism as powerful, detrimental forces in American P-12 schools. As members of a profession dedicated to empowerment and to the dismantling of oppression, social workers are called to respond to these forces. Social workers work in and with schools in diverse roles (e.g., practitioners, community partners, organizational leaders, contracted providers), and are ethically obligated to challenge injustice. As such, we begin by acknowledging social work's complex relationship with race. This presentation considers the state of affairs for COC in schools, social work's professional and ethical obligations, and extant opportunities for social workers to learn to address structural racism. To thoroughly consider race in schools and in the institutions that prepare social workers to work in schools, a conceptual framework is employed that is informed by theory centered on race—critical race theory and racial formation theory.

In this conceptually driven review presentation, empirical evidence about race and P-12 schooling is reviewed in addition to guidelines and standards for practitioners that frame social workers' obligations to address issues of racial inequity and injustice, and the state of professional learning opportunities about race for social workers and other human service professionals.

**FEBRUARY 2, 2021**

## **2A1 Social Support: Increasing Resiliency Among Individuals Who Have Experienced Trauma**

Timmesha Butler, LCSW

Social support is a key factor in building rapport in a working relationship. It creates an environment of safety and trust. In addition, social support has been associated with increasing resiliency among individuals who have experienced some form of adverse life events (Zoellner, 2015). Different forms of social support act as a catalyst in developing the motivation to adopt healthy and reduce risky behaviors.

Specifically, for students with disabilities, social support has been shown to increase self-esteem and optimism. Students who perceive their educational environments as safe and supportive are more willing to be receptive of resources. Social support is a unique concept in that it varies based on individual need. However, the University of Pennsylvania (2019) describes four types of social support as 1. Emotional, 2. Instrumental, 3. Informational, and 4. Appraisal.

The purpose of this presentation is to present social support as a reliable resource in trauma-informed care. This presentation will use the four types of social support as a foundation for identifying micro-level interventions and methods to effectively address issues related to trauma in the school environment. Additionally, the presentation will expand on social support related practices that specifically target the trauma experienced by students with learning and or behavior/emotional disabilities.

## **2A2 Complex Trauma in the Classroom and Therapeutic Strategies to Address Learning**

Ashley Ice, LCSW

Exposure to complex trauma has profound effects on youth brain development. Trauma that effects development shows up in the classroom and can impact an individual's ability to learn, especially if their ability to regulate is underdeveloped. We discuss complex trauma and its impact, the implications of working with trauma populations, and effective therapeutic strategies to help youth heal in academic institutions.

## **2A3 The Synergy Between Motivational Interviewing and Trauma-Informed Practice**

Maria Hu Hydon, DSW, LCSW; Umeka Franklin, MSW, PPSC

This presentation will discuss how Motivational Interviewing (MI) can be utilized to enhance systems that are trauma-informed. Participants will learn the specific strategies of MI that promotes a trauma-informed system. The presentation will also discuss the domains of trauma informed care and how MI is trauma-informed. Participants will learn the five techniques of MI that assists with engaging with clients. Interactive activities will be integrated within the

presentation to ensure participants become familiar with the synergy between MI and Trauma-Informed Practice.

## **2A4 CSEC in Schools: Trauma-Informed Practices for Preventing and Responding to Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Schools**

Holly Priebe-Sotelo, MSW, PPSC

This workshop will provide participants with the current trends, research, and the latest trauma-informed strategies for preventing and intervening with commercial sexual exploitation within the school community.

## **2B1 Trauma-informed Skills for Educators (TISE) - Part I**

Vivien Villaverde, MS SW, LCSW, PPSC; Pamela Vona, MA, MPH

The Trauma-Informed Skills for Educators (TISE) is a professional development designed to enhance educators' knowledge about trauma. Part 1 focuses on increasing educators' understanding of trauma prevalence, impacts, and recognizing symptoms on students. Part 2 helps educators learn concrete skills and strategies to support students to foster trauma responsiveness throughout the school community. This training aims to increase knowledge and skills of all school staff as well as provide support services staff the tools to help engage their school to be more trauma-responsive.

## **2B2 Resources to Build Resilience: Strategies to Build Resilience in our Youth and Ourselves**

Kelly Hubbell, MSW, LCSW

Chronic stress and trauma can have a major impact on the nervous system and the brain. In this session, participants will learn strategies to help reset the nervous system and promote well-being. Trauma informed research indicates that resiliency factors are correlated to recovery and well-being. These practical strategies are not only helpful in working with students in school but also teachers and adults in addressing compassion fatigue. Participants will learn practices that they can implement only a daily basis to reset their nervous system and connect with those around them.

## **2B3 Understanding the Neurosequential Model of Education and Trauma-informed Educational Techniques for the Classroom**

Jennifer Lewis, PhD, LCSW; Bianca Harper, DSW, LCSW

Trauma informed practices have become the standard of care in clinical practice settings and have been integrated into the course content at most schools of social work. However, many programs have not considered how the delivery of the content impacts the students with lived experience of trauma, which is increasingly more common in schools of social work. Informed by the Neurosequential Model of Education (Perry, 2013 ) the presenters will offer a new approach

to the sequencing of clinical practice courses to ensure that the most effective learning care take place.

## **2B4 Rethinking Trauma-Informed Practices in Schools from a Social Justice Perspective**

Stacy Gherardi, PhD, MSW, LCSW

The integration of trauma-informed practices into schools represents an important opportunity to build healthy, supportive schools that are responsive to student needs. Despite their promise, frameworks for trauma-informed schools are often focused primarily on understanding the impact and pervasiveness of trauma and tend to overlook the role schools play in perpetuating trauma. These realities can lead to an understanding of trauma-informed education that is largely deficit-oriented and disengaged from family and community. This session will explore these issues and share considerations for the implementation of strengths-based, social justice centered trauma-informed practices.

## **Tuesday Lunch Panel - Special Education Advocacy During Covid**

Paola Santana, MS, BA; Julian Goodwin, BA, MSW in process

Remote learning has proven to be an essential measure in keeping our children and families safe during this global pandemic. For many students with disabilities however, accessing needed services has become more difficult, leading to gaps in academic and socio-emotional support, disproportionately effecting this minority group. How do we as social workers, educators, and family members, adapt our practices and methods to overcome this inequity and more effectively meet the needs of these unique and incredible individuals? Join our discussion, facilitated by a special educator and a family advocate as we work together to find solutions.

## **2C1 Creating a Trauma-Informed Culture for Students Who Were Formerly Incarcerated**

Susan Hess, MSW, LCSW-IL; Yehudah Pryce, BA, MSW in process

This workshop will introduce Trauma-Informed Interview Coaching as an innovative approach to assist students with criminal justice histories find success in applying for employment and higher education. Participants will work with trauma-informed principles as applied through an intersectional, anti-oppressive lens to engage in educational practices that promote social justice.

## **2C2 We Need Wellness Centers, and We Need Them Now!**

Cristina Dobon Claveau, LCSW, PPS; Craig Gibbs, LCSW, PPS; Sabrina Vella, LCSW, PPS

Wellness Centers are not a new concept in schools. The implementation of the Wellness Centers in Roseville Joint High School District was a very fast process with many challenges along the way. The presenters will discuss the implementation of their comprehensive student-centered

and trauma-informed Wellness Program within the guides of a Multi-Tiered System of Support framework and how the program went from idea to a district priority.

### **2C3 The Power of Positive Language: A Trauma Informed Approach to Build Resiliency and a Culture of Connectedness and Empowerment**

Rosemary Alamo, LCSW, PPSC; Rick Ornelas, MSW

The use of positive language is a critical tool for social work practitioners. It helps build rapport and trust with clients, parents, teachers, and colleagues. Whether social work practitioners communicate verbally or in written form, the language selected will affect how the message is perceived. Social work practitioners in either a micro or macro role can utilize positive language to foster resiliency in schools, help mitigate conflict, improve communication, increase optimism in others, and can portray the social worker as credible and respectable.

### **2C4 Trauma-informed Skills for Educators (TISE) - Part II**

Vivien Villaverde, MS SW, LCSW, PPSC; Pamela Vona, MA, MPH

See 2B1.

***Workshops will be added as updates & confirmations come in.***

**[Click to register.](#)**

## Presenter Bios

### Alejandra Acuña, PhD, LCSW, PPSC

Alejandra Acuña is an Assistant Professor in the social work department at Cal State Northridge. Dr. Acuña earned her PhD in Social Welfare from UCLA and her MSW from UC Berkeley. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) and holds a Pupil Personnel Services Credential (PPSC) in Child Welfare and Attendance and School Social Work. In 30 years of work in health and human services, she has experience in macro- to micro-level social work practice primarily with low-income ethnic minority urban youth and families in various settings (primarily public schools). She provides consultation and training, presents at conferences locally and nationally, and is the lead author of several peer-reviewed journal articles on topics that include school-based interventions, parenting & family communication, PTSD & resilience, Latin American immigrants, and minority male college student success. Her research interests include urban youth and families, trauma- and resilience-informed and responsive systems, and cultural/traditional approaches to mental health treatment. [aacuna@csun.edu](mailto:aacuna@csun.edu)

### Rosemary Alamo, LCSW, PPSC

Rosemary Alamo is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and an Associate Professor with USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. She has over 25 years of experience in social work serving children, youth and families in diverse settings to include schools, community-based organizations, public child welfare and health care. Her career has focused on promoting the well-being, health, and mental health of vulnerable populations along with building appropriate infrastructures that will support them. She serves as the Director for Region I for NASW-CA Chapter. Rosemary currently co-leads a new innovative initiative that brings together law enforcement and social work professionals to create meaningful change in regard to how these two fields collaborate to support communities in need. She serves on the board for the Hollenbeck Police Activities League. Rosemary will be graduating with her Doctorate in Behavioral Health from Arizona State University in May 2020. [ralamo@usc.edu](mailto:ralamo@usc.edu)

### Marina Badillo, LCSW, DSW Candidate

I am currently a doctoral student at New York University's Silver School of Social Work. I graduated with a Master of Science in Social Work in 2011 and obtained my social work clinical licensure from New York State in February 2015. My current position is a school counseling director at AIM I Charter Transfer High School in Brooklyn, New York. I am in a school leadership position focusing on developing and supervising youth development services for students' ages 15 to 21 years of age. Prior to this position, I was school social worker and a clinical supervisor overseeing the social work department for grades K through 8 at Harlem Village Academy East Middle and Elementary Schools. I provided direct clinical services for students ages 5 to 14 and their respective families. I also have acquired clinical social work experience in community mental health in Harlem for the past 8 years. I have expertise in providing treatment across the

developmental life span including mothers & babies, families, youth, adolescents, and adults. I also have knowledge and experience working with children with disabilities both in community family services and within the school system for public and charter schools. I have special clinical and research interests in social work ethics, organization structure and leadership, and clinical supervision in schools. [mab1422@nyu.edu](mailto:mab1422@nyu.edu)

### **Jahanna Bailey, DSW, LCSW-BACS**

Jahanna Bailey, DSW, LCSW-BACS, serves as an Assistant Professor of Professional Practice in the School Social Work, where she teaches research and practice courses, as well as electives in the area of at-risk youth. Originally from New Orleans, Louisiana, she earned a Doctorate in Social Work from Tulane University. For over 13 years Dr. Bailey served as a clinician and supervisor at Capital Area Human Services District's School Based Therapy Program before coming to Louisiana State University. Her practice experience includes extensive work with children, youth and families, particularly in the school setting.

Dr. Bailey believes that the field of social work is an instrumental avenue for facilitating and empowering individuals to become active agents in social change. Her research area focuses on children and youth, with specific emphasis on childhood trauma. She has facilitated numerous workshops across the state on empirically based interventions with at risk youth and families. Throughout her social work career, she has been dedicated to serving and advocating for the welfare of children, youth and their families. [jahanabailey@lsu.edu](mailto:jahanabailey@lsu.edu)

### **Timmesha Butler, LCSW**

Ms. Butler is currently an assistant professor at Ramapo College of New Jersey, and licensed clinical social worker in the state of New Jersey. Ms. Butler has three years of experience teaching courses in social work education. Additionally, she has six years of direct care experience working with individuals, children, and families, with special interest in working with children and young adults. Her experience includes an extensive history working with various mental health and developmental disorders such as: ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), emotional behavior disturbance, intellectual disability, anxiety, and depression. She has previously operated as a social worker in the field of child and family services, where she worked with children in foster care homes providing home based therapeutic care. She then transitioned to the District of Columbia Public school system, where she provided a host of services to students with and without disabilities. Her experience includes assessments, intervention, family engagement, service coordination, program planning, and student advocacy. [tbutler4@ramapo.edu](mailto:tbutler4@ramapo.edu)

### **Jandel Crutchfield, PhD, LCSW**

Jandel Crutchfield is an assistant professor in the School of Social Work at UTA who earned her PhD in Social Work at Louisiana State University. Dr. Crutchfield's work is designed to understand underlying contributions to the stagnation in racial disparity gaps for vulnerable

people of color in all sectors of society. Her main foci include the following 1) examining cases that describe the lived experiences of discrimination that vulnerable people of color experience and which contributes to disparities, 2) identifying institutional, societal, and individual level racial and skin color bias that contributes to such disparities, 3a) demonstrating the need for better training in cultural engagement for professionals working in any system with vulnerable people of color and 3b) identifying tools for better training in cultural engagement for these professionals. Jandel is secretary to the Board of ACSSW. [jandelcrutch@yahoo.com](mailto:jandelcrutch@yahoo.com)

### **Amandla Daniels, MSW, SSW**

Amandla Daniels received her bachelor's and master's degrees in Social Work from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Helen Bader School of Social Welfare.

Amandla has experience working with youth in several settings. She completed her undergraduate field placement at St. Charles Youth and Family Services' Focus Program, a residential treatment center for adolescent boys. In addition, she completed a clinical field placement at Milwaukee Academy, a residential treatment center for adolescent females and in the Milwaukee Public Schools at the elementary and high school levels.

Amandla is now the first School Social Worker (SSW) at the Vel R. Phillips School located in Milwaukee County's juvenile detention center. At Vel R. Phillips School, Amandla, with the help of her coworkers, developed trauma informed practices and is providing on-going training for the educational program to best meet the needs of students and staff at Vel R. Phillips. She is also a member of the Wauwatosa School District's Mental Health Content Team. [danielam@wauwatosa.k12.wi.us](mailto:danielam@wauwatosa.k12.wi.us)

### **Cristina Dobon Claveau, LCSW, PPS**

With over 14 years as a School Social Worker in both Minnesota and California, Cristina has made her work her passion. Cristina was a School Social Worker for 8 years in Minnesota, serving students K-12. Since moving to California, Cristina has taken on leadership roles around Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports and provided direct service to students as an Educationally Related Mental Health Services counselor. Cristina is currently a Wellness & Prevention Coordinator for the Roseville Joint Union High School District, in the Sacramento area, and is responsible for Coordinating whole-child Wellness Services within a Multi-Tiered System of Support Framework. She is an instructor at California State University-Sacramento teaching the Pupil Personnel Services Credential course for School Social Work and a Board Member of the California School Social Workers Association. [cdobon-claveau@rjuhsd.us](mailto:cdobon-claveau@rjuhsd.us)

### **Umeka Franklin, MSW**

Umeka Franklin began her career as an adjunct field faculty lecturer teaching integrative seminars as well as courses in military clinical experience and Virtual Field Practicum. She also

served as a field liaison at the Virtual Academic Center. She is currently a clinical assistant professor in field education in the Department of Children, Youth and Families.

A licensed clinical social worker, she has worked across the lifespan providing services to various populations. She served in a leadership role as a social work coordinator working with military veterans for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. After earning a Veterans Health Administration Mentor Certification, Franklin mentored and supported employees and staff at the VA. She has also worked as a psychiatric social worker for the Los Angeles Unified School District, providing direct clinical services to individuals, families and groups. In addition, she has expertise as a medical social worker with an emphasis on nephrology, as well as working with children and families who have experienced traumatic events.

Franklin received a bachelor's degree in social work and a gerontology certificate from California State University, Los Angeles. She received her master's degree in social work and a Pupil Personnel Services credential from USC. She is currently pursuing her Doctor of Education at the USC Rossier School of Education. [ufrankli@usc.edu](mailto:ufrankli@usc.edu)

### **Evelyn Garcia, LCSW, PPSC, MSW**

Evelyn Garcia is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with a Pupil Personnel School Credential. Ms. Garcia holds a bachelor's degree from Cal Poly Pomona and a Master of Social Work with specialized training in mental health from San Diego State University. Ms. Garcia proudly serves as a School Site Social Worker and Field Instructor at Will Rogers Middle School which is part of the Lawndale Elementary School District (LESD). LESD is a Teaching Institute for MSW and Counseling interns, and MFT trainees which means she provides high quality training and instruction to cohorts of eight to eleven interns and trainees every school year. Ms. Garcia works to ensure student access to mental health services, suicide and bullying prevention, increase mental health awareness, supports parent engagement, attendance, family linkage to community resources, PBIS implementation and provides staff professional development training. Ms. Garcia is driven by the ideal that every child has the right to an equitable educational experience. In 2018 Ms. Garcia was recognized for her innovative and outstanding service in the field of social work earning the Heart of Social Work Award by the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work.

### **Stacy Gherardi, PhD, LCSW, MSW**

Stacy A. Gherardi PhD, LCSW is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at New Mexico State University. Her experiences as a classroom teacher and a school social worker inform her work which focuses broadly on the intersections between social and educational policy. Her past work has explored models for school social work and interprofessional practice in schools, and the community school movement. Her current work is largely focused on understanding and evaluating efforts to implement social justice-oriented trauma-sensitive practices in culturally diverse schools. Stacy is a Director on the Board of ACSSW. [sgherard@nmsu.edu](mailto:sgherard@nmsu.edu)

## **Craig Gibbs, LCSW, PPSC**

Serving children and families through a systems framework while working at all levels has been 23 years in the making. Craig has experience providing clinical services through private practice, IEP's, school mental health programs and the juvenile court. Early in his career Craig investigated Suspected Child Abuse Reports and provided ongoing case management for court ordered family maintenance cases. While in Southern California Craig provided Educationally Related Mental Health Service to student K-12 and collaborated with county and community partners to develop a juvenile drug court program. Upon returning to Northern California, Craig worked with the Placer County Office of Education coordinating and supporting school districts foster and homeless services programs, provided Eliminating Barriers Learning training to multiple counties and school districts throughout California and initiated a school social work position at the court and community school. Most recently Craig has joined a team within the Roseville Joint Union High School District to develop and implement Wellness Centers in seven high schools. Craig has experience providing the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and is an adjunct instructor with CSU, Sacramento where he teaches the Pupil Personnel Services Credential course to post graduate social workers. [cgibbs@rjuhsd.us](mailto:cgibbs@rjuhsd.us)

## **Julian Goodwin, BA, MSW in progress**

Julian Goodwin is a special education teacher in Albuquerque Public Schools and an MSW intern with the American Council for School Social Work. He is currently completing his MSW at New Mexico State University. [jgoodw01@nmsu.edu](mailto:jgoodw01@nmsu.edu)

## **Mandy Goodwin, MSW, LCSW**

Mandy Goodwin is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker for Cobb County School District. Mandy is also Program Director for Paint Love, an Atlanta-Based Non-Profit Organization that provides extra-ordinary arts programming to youth who have experienced poverty or trauma. Mandy uses art as a tool in her practice to support the community, school, and student. She is a graduate of the University of Georgia School of Social Work and is currently a finalist for School Social Work Association of Georgia's School Social Worker of the Year.

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## **Bianca Harper, DSW**

Bianca Harper received her Doctorate in Social Work at the University of Pennsylvania. She earned her Masters of Social Work degree from Arizona State University and a Bachelor's degree in Special Education from the University of Arizona. Bianca is a licensed clinical social worker and provides individual therapy, group therapy, and family therapy for children and adolescents who have been sexually abused. Additionally, Bianca has direct practice experience in child forensic interviewing, victim advocacy, crisis counseling, school social work, and early childhood development. Bianca's primary research interests include child maltreatment, child welfare, interpersonal violence, traumatic stress, and trauma informed treatment. For her

dissertation, Bianca examined family reunification experiences after sibling sexual abuse. [bmharper@usc.edu](mailto:bmharper@usc.edu)

### **Tamir D. Harper, BA in process**

At 20 years old, Tamir is a non-profit executive, an outspoken advocate for public education, and a student. Tamir D. Harper is a proud product of the School District of Philadelphia and is now a junior at the American University in Washington, DC. At American, Tamir is part of the award-winning Frederick Douglass Distinguished Scholars Program while studying strategic communications with a minor in education.

Tamir is a speaker, advocate, reformer, and a proud education nerd. Harper's work has granted him the opportunity to meet former First Lady, Michelle Obama, to sit on a panel for the US Department of Education concerning teacher diversity, and to represent students that attend underserved and underfunded schools across the country. His advocacy has been included in the Washington Post, TIME magazine, and Newsy. Tamir is the proud Co-founder and Executive Director of UrbEd, Inc, a student-led, student-oriented nonprofit that advocates for a quality and efficient urban education. [tamir@urbedadvocates.org](mailto:tamir@urbedadvocates.org)

### **Susan Hess, MSW, LCSW-IL**

Susan Hess, MSW, LCSW-IL, is a Clinical Assistant Professor at USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. Hess is an advocate, consultant and relational organizer in the areas of trauma informed approaches and the intersections of intimate partner violence. Hess is the Co-Founder of Trauma Informed LA whose mission is to foster resilient communities that promote healing and well-being through collaboration, education, and community engagement. In recognition of her dedication, Hess was presented with the distinguished Dr. Marjorie Braude Award by the City of Los Angeles Domestic Violence City Task Force in October 2013 for innovative collaboration in serving victims of domestic violence. [susanhes@usc.edu](mailto:susanhes@usc.edu)

### **Maria Hu Hydon, DSW, LCSW**

Maria C. Hydon is a Clinical Associate Professor of Field Education. She has spent most of her career as a Psychiatric Social Worker for the Los Angeles Unified School District and a USC faculty member. She has taught graduate-level classes and served as a field liaison to many MSW students.

As an LAUSD psychiatric social worker, Hydon has provided individual, family and group counseling, as well as crisis intervention and home visits for at-risk students. Hydon helped coordinate LAUSD's School Mental Health Field Instruction Program, one of the largest field placement agencies in California. As an intern trainer of the Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) Program, she focused her efforts on implementation and dissemination of CBITS, crisis/threat response and intervention, suicide prevention, trauma

recovery and resiliency. She is now a certified trainer for the newer version of CBITS 2.0 and has trained a number of clinicians in Spanish.

In addition, Hydon is worked as a consultant to the U.S. Department of Education as an educator on resilience strategies for educators and on school behavior threat assessments. She has also trained school officials on Psychological First Aid/Listen, Protect, Connect (PFA/LPC) – which is an evidence-informed universal prevention intervention for educators and school staffs to utilize after crises or disasters. In the year 2016, Hydon was the first who helped developed a mental health initiative with the Consulate of El Salvador in Los Angeles. For the two consecutive years, the initiative has had MSW students who are under the supervision of a licensed practitioner offering short-term counseling services for free regardless of immigration status. Maria is the incoming Treasurer of ACSSW. [mariahu@usc.edu](mailto:mariahu@usc.edu)

### **Kelley Hubbell, MSW, LCSW**

Kelley Hubbell, LCSW is a school social worker and an education consultant. Kelley was on the founding team of Collegiate Academies, a group of charter schools in New Orleans, LA, where she spearheaded the development of the school based mental health program. Currently, Kelley lives in Asheville, NC and works at the YWCA of Asheville as the Women's Empowerment Director. She is also the founder of the Red Crayon Practice, an consulting and counseling practice that consults with schools on mental health and SEL programming, coaches parents, and empowers youth through therapeutic intervention. In her free time, you can find Kelley on a long hike in the mountains or trying out the most recent baking recipe. [Kelley.hubbell@acssw.org](mailto:Kelley.hubbell@acssw.org)

### **Stephen Hydon, EdD, MSW**

Stephen P. Hydon is a Clinical Professor at the University of Southern California, Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. He also chairs the School Social Work Program, one of the largest in the country, with over 200 students each year earning credentials to practice school social work in public school settings. Dr. Hydon's interests lie in social work practice in schools, child welfare, and secondary traumatic stress. He has trained nationwide on secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, educator resilience and the Psychological First Aid - Listen, Protect, Connect, Model, and Teach curriculum for school personnel. He is a member of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and the Trauma and Services Adaptation Center for Resiliency, Hope and Wellness in Schools. Recently, Dr. Hydon was funded to co-lead a team of experts in the fields of education and secondary trauma to create a one-of-a-kind online learning platform for educators experiencing secondary traumatic stress entitled Support for Teachers Affected by Trauma (STAT): [www.statprogram.org](http://www.statprogram.org). He is married to his wife Maria, who is also a professor at USC and a current ACSSW board member. In his spare time, Dr. Hydon loves to cook, watch sports, and spend time with their three children. Steve is the current president of ACSSW. [hydon@usc.edu](mailto:hydon@usc.edu)

## Ashley Ice, LCSW

Ashley (she/her/hers) is a Licensed Social Worker and a current Doctor of Social Work candidate at Aurora University. Ashley has experience working with children, adolescents, and adults in various levels of care: inpatient, outpatient, and partial hospitalization programs, residential treatment centers, DCFS and child welfare, non-profit agencies, and diagnostic treatment centers. She received professional training, supervision, and consultation in: Attachment, Regulation, and Competency (ARC), Trauma-Focused CBT (TF-CBT), and Advanced Psychodynamic Training through three year-long didactic fellowships. In therapy, Ashley integrates psychodynamic theory, play therapy, expressive arts, and body-based mindfulness practices (meditation, hypnosis, yoga, breath work & emotion focused tapping). Her clinical interests and specialties include complex trauma/PTSD, eating disorders, self-injury, family systems, and LGBTQIA+ friendly. Ashley believes in helping clients develop a safe space to strengthen their inner guidance and self-compassion, foster positive relationships, and embrace the resiliency of their trauma narrative to discover their true self. [ice.ashley@ymail.com](mailto:ice.ashley@ymail.com)

## Brandi Lamana Conrad, DSW, LCSW-BACS

Brandi Lamana Conrad, DSW, LCSW-BACS, is an Assistant Professor of Professional Practice at Louisiana State University's School of Social Work. Dr. Conrad has practiced as a social worker since 2004, working in the Family Services Department for the St. Tammany Parish Department of Children and Family Services, as a school-based therapist and supervisor for Capital Area Human Services, School Based Therapy Program, as well as treating children and adolescents in her private practice. She has been a Board Approved Clinical Supervisor providing clinical supervision to social workers seeking LCSW licensure since 2013.

Dr. Conrad has taught numerous courses focusing on research, policy, diagnoses, human behavior, and the Social Work in Schools elective. Additionally, she has presented at various conferences and workshops throughout her social work career. Dr. Conrad's research focuses on children and adolescents, specifically in the area of school based social work and trauma. Dr. Conrad is conference chair and newsletter editor for ACSSW. [bl255@yahoo.com](mailto:bl255@yahoo.com)

## Jennifer Lewis, PhD, LCSW

Jennifer Lewis joined the USC School of Social Work faculty in the Mental Health Concentration in 2012. She is a lead professor for Social Work Practice in Integrated Care Settings and Advanced Practice With Complex Social Work Cases. She has also developed and taught online courses in the School Virtual Academic Center. Her pedagogical interests include specialized neurobiologically informed education for students who have lived experience with trauma. She serves in leadership roles at the University Task Force on Interdisciplinary Communities, Chairing Curriculum Committee in the Adults Mental Health and Wellness Department and holds an elected position on Curriculum Council. Lewis also works with the Community Psychiatry Program overseeing fellows and residents at University of California San Diego. Most recently, Lewis was a Co-Investigator and Project Director at U.S. Department of Health and

Human Services grant for HIV-positive mothers who are abusing substances to prevent the abuse, neglect and abandonment of children. Previously she spent ten years in Integrated Primary Care and AIDS Service Organizations providing program development and implementation, administrative and clinical supervision and direct care. Her professional interests include HIV and women integrated care, suicide prevention, trauma, stress and resilience. [j.lewis@usc.edu](mailto:j.lewis@usc.edu)

### **Joshua MacNeill, MEd**

Josh began his Lakeside career as a teacher where he quickly began adapting trauma-informed strategies into his classroom. He realized how important this approach was and saw amazing improvements in his students. Because of Josh's success both in his classroom and in communicating trauma-informed educational practices, he began to get many requests to consult and train others, which propelled him to become the Director of Lakeside's NeuroLogic® Initiative.

In addition to earning his Masters in Multicultural Education, Josh has completed The Child Trauma Academy's Neurosequential Model of Education training program. He has presented at regional, state, national and international conferences and now offers training and consultation for schools and individuals throughout the United States and abroad. Josh has written a book filled with activities for classroom teachers that help regulate each level of the brain.

### **Amy Nelson, MSSW, CAPSW**

Amy Nelson, CAPSW, has been a school social worker in the Milwaukee area for nearly 15 years, working in both public and private schools. She is also a co-founder of the Urban School Professional Network, a nonprofit organization offering resources, consultation, and support for non-public mental health professionals. Amy is driven by her desire to break down barriers to learning and by her passion to empower students, parents, and families. Whether facilitating a parent workshop, partnering with teachers on potential interventions for students, or working one-on-one with youth, she fosters collaborative relationships to facilitate change. While never wavering from her desire to make a difference in the lives of others, Amy recognized she must also take better care of herself. This realization led her to explore, and experience, life coaching. Inspired by how coaching helped guide her own self-care journey, she enrolled in the University of Wisconsin-Madison Certified Professional Coach Program in fall 2019. Amy's experiences have cemented her belief in the power of life coaching and its impact on wellness, not only for students and families, but also for the professionals who have dedicated their lives to helping others. [anelsonssw@gmail.com](mailto:anelsonssw@gmail.com)

### **Rick Ornelas, Clinical Associate Professor**

Rick Ornelas has 21 years of law enforcement experience. He is a Clinical Associate Professor with USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. He has 21 years of law enforcement experience. He works with an array of populations to include law enforcement, individuals,

couples, families, groups, and work organizations. Rick is a facilitator for the CA Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, Sherman Block Supervisory Leadership Institute. He also teaches first responders communication strategies to effectively interact and de-escalate consumers with mental illness. In addition, Rick's long-term focus is Integrated Behavioral Health for Law Enforcement and First Responders. Rick is pursuing a Doctorate of Behavioral Health from Arizona State University. [ricardoo@usc.edu](mailto:ricardoo@usc.edu)

### **Holly Priebe Sotelo, MSW, PPSC**

Experienced Clinical Associate Professor, Field Education with a demonstrated history of working in the higher education, K-12 public education, and child welfare industries. Skilled in Nonprofit Organizations, Community Outreach, Curriculum Development, Public Speaking, and Program Development. Strong child welfare services professional and a Doctoral Candidate at Sol Price School of Public Policy of Planning and Development from the University of Southern California. Areas of expertise and interest include the micro-mezzo-macro practices of the prevention and intervention of human trafficking, interpersonal and intergroup conflicts and violence, school bullying, school crisis response, child abuse, and family violence. [hsotelo@usc.edu](mailto:hsotelo@usc.edu)

### **Yehudah Pryce, BA, MSW in process**

Yehudah Pryce was arrested in 2002 at the age of 19 and sentenced to 24-years in prison for a non-violent robbery. He is currently on parole after being released from prison early in October of 2018. Since his time of release, he has earned a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and is in the last semester of his MSW program at the University of Southern California Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work.

Yehudah is currently the Chair of the USC student interest group, Unchained Scholars; a psychotherapist intern at the Beit T'Shuvah residential addiction treatment center; and an ICMS program manager providing services for community members in South Los Angeles who are experiencing chronic homelessness and high-acuity mental health challenges. He completed an Orthodox Jewish conversion program and considers faith an integral part of his social work. [opryce@usc.edu](mailto:opryce@usc.edu)

### **Maria Ruelas, EdD, MSW, PPSC**

For the past eight years, Dr. Maria Ruelas has served as the District Social Worker for the Lawndale Elementary School District (LESD). She has become a leader in the field of social work and education by redefining her role in school settings. With the support of the Director of Student Support Services, Dr. Ruelas has changed the infrastructure of the LESD's schools by working alongside eight school social workers and partnering with more than ten community mental health agencies, organizations, and universities to address the social and emotional needs of the Lawndale community.

Dr. Ruelas has also enabled LESD to become a Teaching Institute for the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work by hosting and supervising more than 60 master-level social work interns every year. Interns and students at LESD are provided with the latest evidenced-based, data-driven frameworks to reduce disciplinary incidents, increase schools' sense of safety and support in turn, resulting in improved academic outcomes for students. Therein, these opportunities have also provided graduate-level interns and trainees across disciplines and universities to receive high quality field education experiences.

Dr. Ruelas' creativity, hard work, and dedication for program development and strategic planning has led LESD to receive numerous invitations to present at state and national conferences. In addition, it has led the district to receive acknowledgements and distinctions, such as the Agency of the Year Award by the Field Education department at the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. Dr. Ruelas is recognized for the work she has done to influence, build capacity, and opportunities for social workers in school settings not only in the Lawndale community but across districts in Los Angeles County and across the state being named Social Worker of the Year by the California Association of School Social Workers.

Dr. Ruelas returned to her alma mater, University of Southern California (USC) and recently earned her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership concentrating on Educational Psychology. Prior to entering the doctoral program, Dr. Ruelas earned her master's degree, Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) and Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) credentials at the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work.

Dr. Ruelas research interests include school mental health, behavioral health, PBIS, bullying, trauma, school safety, equity, and gendered trends in elementary and postsecondary learning environments. She is an avid traveler and has visited close to 20 countries since she began traveling at the age of 18. Dr. Ruelas and her dog, Romeo enjoy the outdoors and spending quality time with family and friends. [maria\\_ruelas@lawndalesd.net](mailto:maria_ruelas@lawndalesd.net)

### **Paola Santana, BA, MS**

Paola Santana works at Parents Reaching Out since 2018 as a bilingual family liaison. She is originally from Ecuador and she has been living in the United States for 19 years, and happily married to her best friend for 35 years, they have a twelve-year-old daughter who is gifted with sensory issues. She has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Currently, she is also a consultant for Telehealth (HIAI Touch). She lived in California for four years where she started helping bilingual students at school. She moved to New Mexico with her husband and she has been working in the community helping families who have children with special needs for 15 years. Her goal is to empower families to advocate for their children and learn about their educational rights by giving them the information through trainings and materials that are relevant for achieving their main goal as a parent. [psantana@parentsreachingout.org](mailto:psantana@parentsreachingout.org)

## **Michele Sela-Amit, PhD**

Dr. Michal Sela-Amit is a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Southern California Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. Dr. Sela-Amit specializes in working with children, youth, and families. She teaches clinical practice courses with youth and young adults as well as courses on diversity, social justice, and working with systems serving children and families including juvenile justice and child welfare. Dr. Sela-Amit is a recognized expert on the use of expressive practices in the social work profession. She advocates the use of theory, research, and clinical practice with the expressive arts as tools to heal trauma and to promote the empowerment and growth of clients, groups, and communities. She has researched and written on the role of the expressive arts in promoting resilience of children, adolescents, and their families. Dr. Sela-Amit is on the advisory board of non-profit organizations that work with at-risk youth in schools and in the juvenile justice system. She also works with the Council on Social Work Education to promote the integration of expressive practices into the profession. [mselaami@usc.edu](mailto:mselaami@usc.edu)

## **Martika Tucker, ACSW, PPSC**

Martika Tucker earned her master's degree, Child Welfare and Attendance, and Pupil Personnel Services credentials at USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. Ms. Tucker has provided services and support to the families of the Lawndale Elementary School District (LESD) as an intern and School Site Social Worker. Throughout Ms. Tucker's profession as a School Site Social Worker at Mark Twain Elementary School, she has cultivated a positive school climate as a product of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), providing a wide range of mental health services, supervising and training graduate level interns, and providing professional development to staff.

Prior to working for LESD, Ms. Tucker worked at a residential mental health clinic in Orefield, Pennsylvania. Ms. Tucker has extensive experience in providing a wide range of mental health services to diverse populations including, but not limited to, children and families. Her research interests include trauma, restorative justice, PBIS, social emotional learning, and school mental health.

Martika is a New Jersey native who came to California to pursue her passion of helping children and families in school settings. Her interests outside of serving others includes traveling, hiking, taking road trips, spending time with family and friends, and exploring this new state that she is proud to call home! [martika\\_naartucker@lawndalesd.net](mailto:martika_naartucker@lawndalesd.net)

## **Kathy Van Horn, MEd, LP, Licensed Psychologist**

Kathy Van Horn, Med, has been working in the field of education for 35 years as a teacher, counselor, and administrator and has been consulting and training school personnel for the past 20 years. She currently is Executive Vice President of Lakeside and works part time as a professor in Eastern University's graduate school counseling department.

Kathy is a key developer of Lakeside's four trauma-informed schools. She has presented in regional, state, national and international conferences and is the author of a trauma-informed curriculum for students which is being used in schools throughout the United States and abroad. Kathy is passionate about helping schools to become trauma-informed and has been steadfast in her efforts to ensure that NeuroLogic® training provides practical applications that people can implement immediately into their work.

Ms. Van Horn has been trained by the ChildTrauma Academy in the Neurosequential Model of both Therapeutics and Education. She has presented in regional, state, national, and international conferences. Ms. Van Horn has recently published a curriculum for teaching trauma informed principles to students.

### **Sabrina Vella, LCSW, PPSC**

Sabrina has been working in the mental health and wellness field for over 12 years. She has a passion for working in schools, promoting trauma informed school communities, and integrating restorative practices into the work at all levels. For 10 years she worked in a non-profit setting in the bay area of California that collaborated with school districts to provide care to the most vulnerable and at-risk youth in California. She supported various programs including residential and day treatment, county suicide crisis assessment center, counseling enriched classrooms for students with emotional disturbance, ERMHS, and coordinated newly designed mental health referral systems while providing psychotherapy. After her tenure in the nonprofit world, she moved out to work with the Roseville Joint Union High School District to assist with implementing the systems, structures, and day-to-day functioning of Wellness Centers in our eight high schools. [svella@rjuhsd.us](mailto:svella@rjuhsd.us)

### **Vivien Villaverde, MSSW, LCSW, PPSC**

Vivien Villaverde, PPSC, LCSW, is a Clinical Associate Professor in the Field Education Department of the University of Southern California Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology & Human Behavior with a minor in Criminology, Law, & Society from UC, Irvine. She also graduated from Columbia University School of Social Work with a Master of Science degree in Social Work. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the state of California and has a California Pupil Personnel Services Credential. She formerly worked as a Psychiatric Social Worker within the Los Angeles Unified School District and specialized in collaborative program partnerships (Department of Probation, Department of Mental Health and the Department of Children and Family Services), coordination and development serving students in the foster care and the delinquency system within the education system. She was affiliated with LAUSD for more than nine years where she gained significant subject matter experience in coordinated collaboration, program development and capacity building to address student wellness and needs.

Vivien Villaverde is the Teaching Institution (TI) Coordinator responsible for developing large scale community partnerships. As the Coordinator, she assists organizations and agencies in

developing or improving the quality of the MSW training program. The goal of the partnerships is to elevate the quality of MSW training in the field and support community partners on their capacity building projects and endeavors. She also supports Teaching Institutions in their innovative program development and access to cutting edge knowledge. Majority of these consultations are with educational organizations and settings such as Pasadena USD, Lawndale Elementary School Districts, ABC USD, and many more. Prof. Villaverde collaborations resulted in strategic MSW job development at different school districts and ice capacity building for mental services and supportive in schools. In addition, Prof. Villaverde is a Trauma-Informed School Support Specialist for the Treatment Services and Adaptation Center for Resiliency, Hope and Wellness in Schools (TSA). TSA is a SAHMSA funded center supporting schools' trauma-informed strategic transformation and program development to provide evidence-based prevention and early intervention services. She provides consultation and supports for Trauma-Responsive School Transformation and capacity building training in Trauma-Informed Skills for Educators (TISE), Psychological First Aid (PFA), Services to Students Exposed to Trauma (SSET), Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS), Core Concepts of Child and Adolescent Trauma, Disaster Response, Planning and Management, Crisis Response and Management, Motivational Interviewing, Problem Solving Therapy and others. She collaborates and trains nationally and internationally with many schools and districts (ABC USD, PUSD...). [villaver@usc.edu](mailto:villaver@usc.edu)

### **Pamela Vona, MA, MPH**

Pamela Vona, MA, MPH, is currently the Program Manager for the Treatment and Services Adaptation Center for Resilience, Hope and Wellness in Schools. Her interests include understanding how to support the implementation of trauma practices in the school setting. Specifically, her work has focused on how web-based platforms can support training in and implementation of evidence-based practices in schools. Ms. Vona served as a lead developer of the Trauma Responsive School Implementation Assessment—an online assessment designed to help schools improve their trauma-responsiveness. She is also leading the development of the Trauma Informed Skills for Developers (TISE) curriculum designed to enhance educators' trauma knowledge and skills. Ms. Vona serves on the School Committee Workgroup for the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) and previously was a member of the NCTSN Policy Task Force. [pamelayo@usc.edu](mailto:pamelayo@usc.edu)

### **Erica Warshawer, MSW, LCSW**

For the past ten years, Erica was the Director of Social Work for a network of schools in the Mid-Atlantic region, a role which supports the overall performance and professional development of school based social workers who collectively serve nearly 12,000 students across CT, RI and NY. Erica owns and operates a private therapy and consulting practice in Philadelphia. She serves middle and high school students as well as adults, provides individual and group clinical supervision to individuals seeking clinical State licensure in NY and PA, and consults with schools and school leaders to enhance social-emotional program development and trauma-informed interventions. Additionally, she provides coaching to help teachers and school leaders develop adaptive leadership skills and emotional intelligence. Erica has taught at

the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Social Work and is currently a Board Member with the American Council of School Social Work, a national organization which supports school social workers in their service to students, schools, and families. Erica is the current Vice-president of ACSSW. [ewarshawer@alpenglowcenter.com](mailto:ewarshawer@alpenglowcenter.com)

### **Stuart Warshawer, MEd, BA**

Stuart earned certification as a Principal in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He was a Fisher Fellow, KIPP Schools, in 2019-2020. In January 2020, he received the School District of Philadelphia Progress Award, and was a Neubauer Fellow in 2018 in the School District of Philadelphia. Mr. Warshawer is the founding principal of KIPP: Cooper Norcross High School in Camden, NJ.

# Additional Information

**CEUs:** CEU approval has been applied for with NASW-WI. While most states will accept CEUs approved by NASW-WI, it is the responsibility of the participant to confirm with your state licensing board.

Up to 18 CEUs can be earned during the 2-day Institute and the 1-day, post-institute Suicide Risk & Assessment Training (up to 6 each day).

**REGISTRATION:** [Click here](#) to be taken to the registration page.

**FEES:** [Click here](#) to be taken to the ACSSW conference website for the fee structure, deadlines, etc. Deadline to avoid a \$25 late fee is January 21<sup>st</sup>. No refunds after January 25<sup>th</sup>.

**W-9:** Purchase orders are acceptable but are payable within 30 days of the Institute. If your district requires a W-9 form from ACSSW, [click here](#) for a copy.

Questions? Contact [acsswconference@gmail.com](mailto:acsswconference@gmail.com)