



Counselors Rock!

LPCA CONNECTION

Official Publication of the Licensed Professional Counselors Association of Georgia

Counselors Rocked the LPCA 34th Annual Convention!

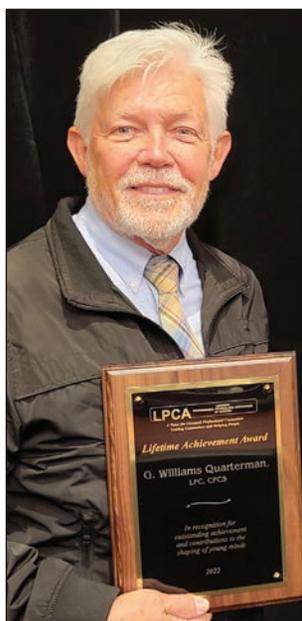


Linda Painter Lifetime Service Award Carolyn Ramp, EdS, LPC, CPCS, ACS

Carolyn's experience in the counseling profession spans over 25 years! She has been a member of LPCA of GA since 1998 and has served as the Eastern District Chair and LPCA President (2019–2020). An invaluable member of our Association, she has helped develop law changes and worked on the Professional Compact legislation. For years, she has been a mentor for future and experienced counselors, and has worked behind the scenes giving guidance and support to LPCA Board members and staff. *(cont. page X)*

Counselor Educator of the Year Award Christian "Peeper" McDonald, PhD, LPC

Peeper was nominated by her students and colleagues from Mercer University primarily for her multi-modal teaching approach that enables her to express concepts and ideas very clearly and effectively. Peeper often invites LPCA to speak at Mercer to describe what counseling actually looks like in the field. She has presented and published on various topics including the struggles minorities face regarding racial attitudes, discrimination, and identity, and how it impacts their lives.



Lifetime Achievement Award William Quarterman, PhD, LPC, CPCS

Bill is a long-time member of LPCA of GA and has been a huge asset as our association navigates bringing parity to the counseling profession. Bill is a professor at Toca Falls College and has been nominated multiple times by his peers and students for both Counselor Educator of the Year and Counselor of the Year.

In 2009 Bill was elected Chair of the GA Composite Board of PC, SW, MFT, and was instrumental in bringing counselors, social workers and marriage and family therapists together to solve the challenging issues that the Board faced.

Student Counselor of the Year Melanie Chambers

Melanie Chambers' commitment to the field of counseling, diversity and inclusion, and advocacy for underserved populations make her the perfect candidate for this award.

She is currently enrolled in the Clinical Mental Health Matters program at LaGrange College where she shows dedication and excellence in her work. She demonstrates leadership within the educational environment by serving as an ambassador between students, professors, and counselors. She also works diligently toward improving the mental health of the underserved population.



See Inside for More LPCA Award Winners!

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2021 AMHCA Legislator of the Year Dave Belton



Dave Belton receiving award from AMHCA President Dr. Beverly Smith at the 2022 LPCA Annual Convention

Georgia House Representative, Dave Belton, from the 112th District, received the 2021 AMHCA Legislator of the Year Award in recognition of his dedication and advocacy for the counseling profession. He was specifically acknowledged for his continued support of LPCs and LMHCs through his sponsored legislation of Georgia HB 395, the Professional Counselors Compact.

2022–2023 LPCA Board of Directors



Front row: Eleanor Wassenberg, Western District Rep.; Keisha Buchanan, Communications Chair; Janisa Nairn, Continuing Education Chair; Corey Milsap, Professional Development Chair; Angela Feeser, Immediate Past President; Bryan Stephens, LPCA President; David Markwell, President-Elect
Back row: (hidden) Lori Rader-Jacobs, former Atlanta District Rep.; Joanna Goulding Kester, Atlanta District Rep.; Megan Boyd, Supervision Chair; Tom Parrett, LPCA Treasurer

Not Pictured: Julia Whisenhunt, Ethics Chair; A.J. Ramirez, Southern District Rep.; Louis Boynton, Western District Rep.

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**Advocacy Excellence Award
Leigh-Anne White, LPC, CPCS**

Leigh-Anne was nominated by her staff and community for her unwavering support and work in a very rural area of Georgia. In 2020, she successfully received a million dollar Health Resources and Services Administration Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (HRSA RCORP) grant to implement prevention, treatment and recovery services in Toombs County. These efforts were so impactful that she secured a \$500,000 psychostimulant grant in 2021. She has been a trailblazer for recovery and anti stigma within her community and beyond.



**Counselor of the Year
Tonya Epps, LPC**

Tonya's colleagues nominated her for her unwavering compassion for her clients and steadfast dedication to ethical counseling.

Tonya Epps completed her MA in Professional Counseling at Liberty University. Her counseling experience included a practicum student internship at Navicent Health, a trauma hospital in Macon, and at C and T Counseling, a mental health rehabilitation center in Marietta where she worked with court ordered clients. Tonya has continued to work with C and T Counseling providing individual and group services to self-referred and court mandated clients.



James Magazine Award for Most Outstanding Non-profits in Georgia



LPCA Lobbyist Julianna McConnell, LPCA Executive Director Gale Macke, LPCA Lobbyist Aubrey Villines, LPCA Lobbyist Irene Munn, and LPCA President Bryan Stephens

**Humanitarian
Robert Clemons, LPC, CPCS**

Robert has a history of working to assist those to become fully licensed counselors, has mentored therapists who have established community mental health centers, sponsored Thanksgiving and Christmas giveaways and partnerships, established summer camp and after school programming. Robert has collaborated with Clayton County Juvenile Court to facilitate programming under the Robert Wood Johnson foundation, Office of Minority Health Grants, and Kaiser Permanente grants. He has also worked with CHAMPS committee in the past with Sue Smith, Georgia Parent Support Network. Robert is an asset to the field of counseling. He holds his license in high regard and works to ensure that upcoming counselors are well trained, provided with resources and granted opportunities to grow and develop in other areas.



**Linda Painter Lifetime Service Award
Carolyn Ramp, EdS, LPC, CPCS, ACS**

(cont. from front page)

Carolyn is a graduate of Georgia Southern University and Augusta College in Counseling. She has worked in almost every type of counseling/therapeutic setting, including agencies, private practices and schools, including being an adjunct professor at Augusta University.

She founded a private practice with almost twenty providers giving LAPCS the opportunity to learn private practice skills and enabling her to pass on her experience and knowledge to the next generation of counselors. As a certified Grief Recovery Specialist and a facilitator for Love and Logic, she specialized in working with families with loved ones living with a personality disorder.

Carolyn voluntarily assisted Augusta University with the application process for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) that was successfully granted to the University. The process takes approximately seven years to complete.

For over twenty years, Carolyn has provided clinical supervision as an Approved Clinical Supervisor through NBCC/ACS and CPCS with LPCA of GA. She has developed and presented continuing education workshops in ethics and supervision for across the state the LPCA Eastern District. She is always ready to help and never take credit for the amazing work she does for advancing the Profession of Counseling.



Immediate Past President Angela Feeser with Past President Carolyn Ramp

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Gale Macke LPCA@LPCAGA.org

Legislative Updates

36 Years and counting...

As we move forward towards 2023, your profession continues to grow in recognition of the importance of the services you provide. You answered the *Call to Actions* without hesitation, you read the plethora of emails LPCA sent to you, and attended workshops with the ever-present COVID threat.

You now have the first PC Compact Licensure Law, soon to be enacted in over 21 states, a licensure law competitive with the surrounding states, and a Speaker of the House, David Ralston, who had to fight to remove restrictions on mental health services that had put Georgia in the bottom rankings for mental health. His HB 1013 is significant and encompasses a statewide change on services.

What is coming next? It is time for DBHDD and DCH to update their manuals to include LPCs. It is time for a Medicaid Amendment to include LPCs.

In 2008, when the state of Georgia was sued by the U.S. Department of Justice over the conditions in seven Georgia psychiatric hospitals, the final decree was that only the Federal Government under CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) could approve adding providers in Georgia. Year after year Georgia has asked the Federal Government to allow Georgia to add providers, but there was always push back from the Federal Government. They said that LPCs and MFTs need to have the word 'diagnose' added to their practice act (change the law) as that was what was necessary to move forward. In 2014 MFTs and in 2016 LPCs added the word 'diagnose' to their scope of practice. Georgia asked again and again and the Federal Government reported back it would take at least two years. It has been more than two years.

Late in 2018, before COVID, LPCA put together a plan for 25 LPCs to join the LPCA Board of Directors in Washington DC, to visit the CMS agency, bringing with them our U.S. Senator and Representatives to demand that LPCs be added. COVID delayed the plan. LPCA is working again with our national lawmakers and future national lawmakers to explain that it is no longer an 'option' to include LPCs as Medicaid reimbursed providers; it is imperative.

There will be a *Call to Action* to join us in Washington, DC, both in-person and virtually, to let our lawmakers know who and what LPCs are and that it is time for LPCs to be added as reimbursed individual Medicaid providers.



PRESIDENT

Bryan Stephens, MA, LPC, NCC, MBA

Mapping the Search for a Fantastic Convention!

I was excited and anxious about hosting our annual convention and conference this May. I am happy to report that the convention was a great success. We had over 700 attendees who came to learn, network, and

enjoy. As usual, I got to see some old "convention friends" and make some new ones as well. For those who attended, I hope that you were able to do the same.

We endeavored to have a wide variety of classes to meet the interests of our organization. The topics selected are based in part on your feedback. Please let us know what you are seeking! You get heard. And if you are thinking of teaching, submit a proposal. Just be ready to speak to a big group of eager learners! And be ready to get asked lots of questions. When LPCs get interested, we get chatty.

Having never been to Great Wolf Lodge before scoping it out, I am happy to say how pleased we were with the staff and the facilities. They did a great job taking care of us. I have to say, not fighting Atlanta traffic was a plus for many. Of course, there was some indoor traffic between sessions. I do want to talk a bit about what I saw that worked and where we can improve. We are open to your feedback in this area.

I was happy to have evening receptions on Tuesday and Wednesday. These were well attended and a nice chance to catch up. Following Angela's plan from last year, we again had a morning program with a full breakfast each day of the formal convention. This created a great kick-off to each day. For me, I prefer my legislative update after breakfast to the whole convention, and not too many people crammed into a room at 7am. Thanks, Angela for the inspiration on this model! The extended food at break was a big hit as well, allowing speakers to actually get a chance to grab a bite. I cannot speak highly enough of the staff at the Lodge. They worked hard to ensure we had a great time.

Challenges again presented themselves with room changes. Every year we need to shift rooms around, and every year we have giant sticky notes up to address these changes. There is always the issue of sign-in sheets going around and making sure everyone gets signed in. We hope to address both of these things next year by looking into a convention app. Yes, LPCA is looking to join the other conventions of the 21st Century! More to come on that. We also heard the call for more CPCS sessions for recertifications and are looking at that structure.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who helped make the event such a success. This includes everyone who jumped in to help out, and if I start listing names, I am sure to leave someone out. Please know how much your effort means to me. I got to stand up and be the Chair and I could not have done it without you.

I look forward to serving you as 2022–2023 President of LPCA!



Angela Feeser and Bryan Stephens at the 34th LPCA Convention

Please open and respond to the LPCA **Call To Action** emails.

Your voice **CAN** make all the difference!

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Angela Feeser, LPC, CPCS

The last twelve months have just flown by! As I prepare to transition from President to Immediate Past President, I wanted to reflect back on all that our amazing team at LPCA has accomplished this year.

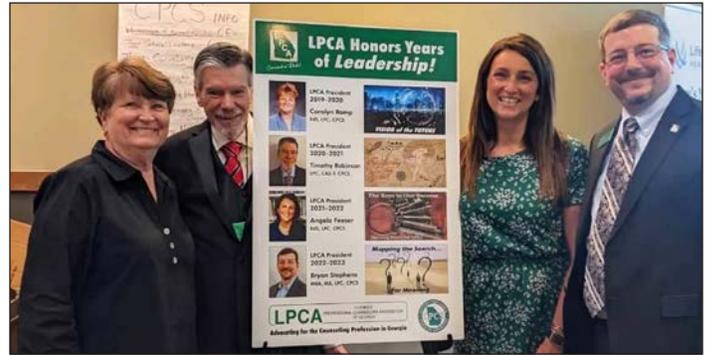
We headed into July as the first state to enact the Counseling Compact! Governor Brian Kemp signed law HB 395 into law on May 10, 2021. In order to move forward with the Counseling Compact, nine more states would be needed to activate the compact. Mid-May we received notice that Maryland enacted the Counseling Compact, and five months later as November rolled around, Florida signed. Then we waited. I honestly thought we may not have ten states for at least 18–24 months. Then, as we approached the change of seasons for Spring, the notifications of states enacting the compact were popping up in our emails like spring flowers! Alabama, Mississippi, West Virginia, Utah, Maine, Florida, Kentucky and Nebraska, the ten state requirement was met! This was accomplished just three weeks shy of one year; I was in awe. As I write this, there are twelve states with legislation pending. Stay tuned for more updates on the Compact at <https://counselingcompact.org>. This website has great resources and tools to help explain what the Compact is and what it will do for our profession.

AMHCA presented LPCA of GA the Outstanding State Chapter Award for 2021 at the virtual meeting in November. AMHCA President Dr. Beverly Smith acknowledged how instrumental LPCA was in the passage of the Counseling Compact. AMHCA also presented Rep. Dave Belton with the Legislator of the Year. Rep. Belton's support for us over this past year has been essential to the success not only with the Compact but also with HB972.

Our lobbyist Julianna McConnell and our consultant Aubry Villines were recognized in the JAMES Magazine 2021 Top Lobbyists Issue. LPCA was also listed in the Top 2021 Business and Trade Associations at #16. Read more at <https://www.paperturn-view.com/insideradvantage/james-sept-oct-2021-web?pid=MTg182833>.

Our Board of Directors had a lot of growth this past year as well. Keisha Pou-Buchanan, PhD, LPC, CPCS, Communications Chair, has been working on building our social media presence in our communities. The goal has been to use social media to share information not only to our members but to the communities we live and work in. At the convention this year, Keisha worked with the Great Wolf Lodge to incorporate hashtag challenges and prizes; we had a great response! If you're interested in helping grow this committee, please let us know. Corey Milsap, PhD, LPC, LMHC, Professional Development Chair, has been working closely with our staff and District Chairs to organize town hall events across the state. Collaborating with Janesta Narin, LPC, CPCS, Continuing Education Chair, we have been able to offer these events with continuing education hours. As we have new members join our Board of Directors this coming term, I'm looking forward to the new ideas, energy and experience that will come together to better serve our organization!

Next month a few of our Board members will travel to the 2022 AMHCA Annual Conference to attend the Leadership Summit. While there, they will have the opportunity to help other states accomplish what LPCA has.



**LPCA Presidents Pose with their Poster at the LPCA Convention
Carolyn Ramp, Tim Robinson, Angela Feeser, and Bryan Stephens.**

Lastly, it was announced at the Convention that HB972, signed by Governor Kemp, will be effective July 1, 2022. This was a fabulous way to start the Convention! If you have not read all of HB972, I highly encourage you to do so, especially those who hold the CPCS credential. I want to thank our amazing sponsors, lobbyists, staff, and LPCA Board for all their time and energy that was behind HB972.

Next year my focus will remain on the changes we implement based on HB972, the Counseling Compact as it proceeds, and my passion for continuing to develop our supervisors. I'm looking forward to the continued opportunity to work with our Board and members. As I mentioned at the convention, getting involved is a great way to learn and grow but is also a part of making a difference for our profession. During the 2021 convention in Savannah, I gave out keys to remind us that we are the gatekeepers to professional counseling.

PRESIDENT-ELECT

David Markwell, PhD, LPC, LCMHC, NCC, CPCS, ACS, BC-TMH

Let me begin by saying thank you to Gale Macke, the LPCA Board, and LPCA members for granting me the opportunity to serve as your 2022–2023 President-Elect. I am both humbled and honored. I look forward to meeting and getting to know our members, as well as working with the Board for the next three years.



The 34th LPCA Convention at the Great Wolf Lodge in LaGrange was a huge success. When I think of the attendees, presenters, volunteers, exhibitors, sponsors, and LPCA staff, all I can say is that you were truly amazing! For those who attended this year, I hope to see you again next year, and for those who were not able to attend this year, I hope that you will join us next time.

I am excited about being the 35th LPCA Conference Chair. While doing some research I discovered that the modern gift for a 35th anniversary is jade. In reading about the symbolism of jade, I found some things of interest. In some circles jade is believed to soothe the mind and support emotional release by freeing one of negative thoughts. It is also thought to yield power, inspiration and encouragement to assist people into becoming who they really are. Similarly, isn't that what we do as counselors? We soothe, support, empower, inspire, and encourage.

From Freud's couch and free association to seeing clients virtually in other states through the Counseling Compact, our profession has truly emerged. I am excited for our future and thankful for LPCA of GA!

EASTERN DISTRICT

Kelly Michael Moselle, MA, MS, CAMS II
Director of Administration and Member Services

LPCA in Athens! Townhall and Trainings Thursday, May 19, 2022



The hustle and bustle of the streets of Athens were alive, not with the footsteps of UGA students, but with LPCs and APCs as they made their way to Holiday Inn Express for a townhall and a day of training. Our Eastern District Chair, Valencia Ayers, LPC, CPCS, NCC, was on hand to welcome the crowd of attendees. These events have been part of the effort to bring LPCA to our district members following the Covid shutdown that kept us all apart.



Valencia Ayers, LPC, CPCS, NCC



Erika Utley, LPC, CPCS

In the morning training, Erika Utley, LPC, CPCS, had the room on their feet as she presented *Therapist Check-In: Are YOU really OKAY?* This workshop took a dive into the ethics of professional competency and self-care. The demands of working through a pandemic, client-concerns, vicarious trauma, and professional obligations all deserve our attention, as well as the demands outside of our profession. This workshop addressed the stigma that counselors must be perfect,

giving permission for counselors to create space for their own mental challenges while still being an effective, competent and ethical counselor. Erika Utley, a published author, kept attendees engaged and active the entire morning.

The afternoon saw the first ever digital dissertation, *There is More to Me than HIV!* by Michael Drew, PhD, LPC. The presentation took a look at individuals living with HIV/AIDS and what makes them resilient in light of their diagnosis. The discovery of purpose was a common thread in this poignant and inspiring workshop.



Dr. Michael Drew, LPC

The morning training, *A Social Justice Pandemic: Addressing Race, Identity and Privilege in Counseling*, was presented by Dr. Candice Norris-Brown, NCC, LPC, ACS, and Dr. Natasha Moon, NCC, LPC, ACS, CCMHC.

Closing out the day was Johnnie Jenkins, III, LPC, CPCS, RPT-S, and LPCA PAC Chair. The Townhall focus was on advocacy for the professional counselor profession, and highlighted many of the achievements of the past 25 years and the work that remains to be done.



Johnnie Jenkins, III, LPC, CPCS, RPT-S

Attendees expressed their enjoyment and gratitude for the event in their area. LPCA appreciates the support and sponsorship of Anchor Hospital and Newport Healthcare who provided the meals.



Corey Milsap, PsyD, LPC, CPCS, Professional Development Chair
Valencia Ayers, LPC, CPCS, NCC, Eastern District Chair
Erika Utley, LPC, CPCS, Presenter
Kelly Mosselle, Director of Administration and Member Services

LPCA in Augusta! Ethics Workshop

Friday, June 10, 2022

The Master's may have been over, but LPCA converged upon Augusta to attend the LPCA training and townhall event. LPCA Past Presidents, Angela Feeser and Carolyn Ramp welcomed attendees to the day long event. Attendees enjoyed breakfast and coffee courtesy of Anchor Hospital.

The morning training, *A Social Justice Pandemic: Addressing Race, Identity and Privilege in Counseling*, was presented by Dr. Candice Norris-Brown, NCC, LPC, ACS, and Dr. Natasha Moon, NCC, LPC, ACS, CCMHC.



Dr. Norris-Brown and Dr. Moon

NORTHERN DISTRICT

Congratulations to Patty Storino Carter who was selected for the 2022 Jack Mezirow Living Theory of Transformative Learning Award for her award-winning paper, *Exploring Visceral Experiences of Physiology: The Role of Embodied Cognition in Fostering Transformative Learning*. Her paper recognizes her contributions to advancing the theory and application of transformative learning. She was also recently awarded the Irene and Curtis Ulmer Award for research in Adult Education.



Patty Storino Carter, LPC

She has passionately encouraged learning as an LPC in private practice for 25 years, and as an instructor at Truett-McConnell University for ten years. In 1992, she was awarded the Georgia Association for Child Abuse Volunteer of the Year. In 1994, she conducted diversity workshops for the Northern District of Georgia's Department of Behavioral Health and Development Disabilities. Currently, Patty is a PhD student in the Learning, Leadership and Organization Development program at the University of Georgia.



Opportunity for Networking and Learning in Augusta



Workshop presented by Dr. Norris-Brown and Dr. Moon was well attended.

After a delicious "South of the Border" lunch provided by Bluff, attendees learned about the emergency transport of clients in 1013. *What's the Emergency?* was presented by Mamie Jones, MA, LPC, MFT.

Closing out the day was a townhall with Angela Feeser and Carolyn Ramp that focused on changes to the licensure law that were updated by House Bill 972 and the PC Compact now approved in eleven states.

This event was sponsored by Anchor Hospital and Bluff, addiction treatment providers in Augusta, Georgia.

ATLANTA DISTRICT

Joanna Goulding, APC, NCC, CBTS

This past year has accentuated the necessity and value of mental health professionals. The LPCA has worked effectively to make Georgia the first state to sign the Compact Bill! We have also worked to ensure that the language of our laws has been updated through the HB 972 Bill. We celebrated these successes at our Annual LPCA Convention. The convention was a huge success! The hallways were packed with our colleagues. The energy was positive and encouraging. I have been especially grateful for the support of this incredible organization. LPCA of GA has adapted and grown in their efficiency and effectiveness. We are engaged on multiple fronts to support this industry: continuing education, professional resources and development and legislative involvement to name a few. I hope you all have visited the LPCA website recently. There are resources that can support you and your practice. I am glad to be part of a team that is focused on adapting and improving. We are better together!



WESTERN DISTRICT

Louis Boynton, PhD, LPC, CPCS

Taco Tuesday Tuesday, May 17, 2022



LPCA joined mental health and wellness groups from around the state to exhibit at the Taco Tuesday networking event to celebrate the expansion of Coweta FORCE (Friends of Recovery for Community Empowerment). Coweta FORCE provides recovery support

services in the community for individuals and family members impacted by addiction. Louis Boynton led the LPCA delegation for this event at the Historic Train Depot in Newnan. The community arrived in force to visit with the many exhibitors on hand. There were many wellness demonstrations throughout the event, as well as a tour of the new Coweta FORCE building. And of course, Tacos!



**LPCA at Coweta FORCE Event
Kelly Moselle, MA, MS, CAMS II**



**Taco Tuesday Networking
at Historic Train Depot in Newnan**



SOUTHERN DISTRICT A.J. Ramirez, EdD, LPC, NCC, CPCS

South Georgia is making great progress on organizing new events focused on mental health needs. With the support of three mental health programs at Valdosta State University, Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling, there has been much needed collaboration between professionals.

We were uplifted and inspired by the hard work and dedication of our clinicians and aspiring clinicians. We are extremely grateful for their tireless efforts to support the members of our communities.

Help is Here! The National Counselors Exam

Johnnie L. Jenkins, III, MA, LPC, RPT-S, CPCS, ACS

In the state of Georgia if you have a Masters from a CACREP school, you can start the process of obtaining licensure after you pass the National Counselors Examination (NCE).



LPCA provides a prep course to assist you in passing the NCE. The classes usually are on Saturdays from 9AM—5PM and last one day. Topics covered include Human Growth and Development, Social and Cultural Diversity, Helping Relationships, Group Work, Career Development, Assessment, Research, and Ethics.

The National Counselors Exam prep workshop is full of tips and tricks on preparing to pass the exam. As your instructor, I spend weeks making sure all the materials are updated, organized into three inch thick notebooks, and ready for each monthly NCE prep workshop event. The pass rate for those taking the workshop is 99%. To ensure that everyone passes the exam, you may attend again at no charge.



NCE Workshop Saturday, April 23, 2022

Front to back, left to right: Kimberly, Edith, Alain, Kathryn, Rachel, Likedra, and DeEveria



We are Social!!!

Keisha P. Buchanan, EdD, LPC, CPCS
Communications Director Chair

In April, LPCA of GA became active on social media and during the conference we posted real time updates, photos, and summaries. Thank you to each of you who joined our hashtag campaign, followed us, smiled for photos, and volunteered to be a part of the communications committee.

Our Instagram handle is #LPCGA22 and our Facebook business is LPCA of GA. If you have not "liked" our FB page or followed us on Instagram, we would be delighted to have you do so. If you would like to join this committee or learn more about volunteering, please use this link to complete the interest form <https://forms.gle/5m4TQWMxP3Ey3TPo7>.

On July 11, 2022, the Child Advocacy Center of Georgia is hosting their 15th Annual One Team Conference. This year's theme is Back to the Basics. I will be the keynote speaker during the plenary session. This conference is free and aims to rejuvenate those working to reduce child abuse and neglect.



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Emotional Intelligence: A Hidden Gem

Janesta Nairn, LPC, NCC, CPCS
Continuing Education Chair

On May 3–6, 2022, I attended the Licensed Professional Counselors Association's 34th Annual Convention and Regional Conference and experienced various

emotions. This article exemplifies how emotional intelligence (EI) is perpetual across many systems in our lives. I hope reading this article will stimulate a desire to continue this conversation, spark in-depth training ideas, and help others become more emotionally considerate and competent.

Emotional intelligence is an essential construct that has started garnering more attention in the past several years. "Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to identify and regulate our own emotions, recognize the emotions of other people and feel empathy toward them, and use these abilities to communicate effectively and build healthy, productive relationships with others." (Emotional Intelligence, 2022). From Emotional Intelligence training in the business world to Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in schools, tending to our emotions and learning to give meaning will help individuals self-regulate, build healthier relationships, and reduce adverse outcomes. Whether we know how to acknowledge them or not, emotions are ever-present and rest at the center of our everyday lives. Learning to articulate the sensation of our emotions amplifies confidence and increases one's emotional intelligence.

I purposefully engage in daily assessments and self-talks to build emotional intelligence. Within the past 30 days, I enjoyed experiencing, resting, articulating, and compartmentalizing the range of emotions commonly felt but not always acknowledged. One of my most memorable emotional roller coaster trips was recently at the Licensed Professional Counselors Association's 34th Annual Convention and Regional Conference; I felt anxious, insecure, and inferior before attending. Simultaneously, I felt a sense of vitality, expectancy, and support. As I traveled to the pre-convention, I shared my thoughts with my husband, who allowed me to ramble for over 40 minutes about my



Emotional intelligence is a multidimensional attribute that guides life's journey.

feelings. In the moment of vulnerability and safety, I knew that I did not have to make sense of my emotions; but that I needed to release them, talk through them, and meaning would evolve. After all, emotional intelligence is a multidimensional attribute that guides life's journey (Bru-Luna, Marti-Vilar, Merino-Soto, Cervera-Santiago, 2021).

While at the convention, there was an array of continuing education (CE) courses that educated, empowered, equipped, encouraged, and, most importantly, ensured our board's compliance. As the Continuing Education Chair, I was delighted to hear about the rooms' synergy, the positive and growth feedback about the presenters and courses, and the valuable materials and slides. Unfortunately, it is impossible to attend all the courses; however, the following three encompassed the importance of emotional intelligence: *Adverse Childhood Experiences and Why Connections Matter*, *Supporting Teens in Despair: Integrating Science with Faith and Spirituality*, and *Let's Talk: Functioning through Numbness*. They urged counselors and practitioners to model the principles of emotional intelligence to foster healing with our clients. Due to emotions having such a significant impact on our behaviors (Emotional Intelligence, 2022), it was exhilarating and arousing to hear presenters share their journey of sorting through clustered and uncharted emotions that led to an emergence of clarity and definition.

Many other courses highlighted the elements of emotional intelligence and suggested cultivating those elements: namely self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and conflict management skills (Emotional Intelligence, 2022). Moreover, working in a consistently evolving profession requires fortitude, education, networking, and emotional intelligence. Specifically, one of our "core professional values... is to enhance human development throughout the lifespan" (American Counseling Association, 2014). Such a responsibility compels us to build awareness and skills with our clients, implement the skills in our own lives, and model principles with our family and loved ones. Overall, emotions shape our actions, ideas, discussions, beliefs, and potential; continuing the research and conversation has endless probabilities, from polishing professional reputations to reducing bullying in school. My fellow counselors and practitioners, let's continue working together to spread the word about emotional intelligence and its impact on our lives.

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Polyvagal Theory and Partner Practices: A New Trauma Healing Method Birthed in GA

Dee Wagner, LPC, BC-DMT



I am excited to write about a new polyvagal-informed multi-generational trauma healing method, and happy to share about it here with Georgia colleagues, so you can be proud that this international method began within our organization.

My artist husband John Cargile, my tai chi teacher son Stephen Wagner, two colleagues, and I have developed partner practices. The method is *Chi for Two, The Energetic Dance of Healthy Relationship*. One of the two colleagues who helped develop the partner practices is Caroline Gebhardt, LPC, who is certified in yoga and specializes in disordered eating and maternal mental health. The other is long-time massage therapy teacher and music artist Mary Lou Davidson.

Polyvagal Theory

In 2015, I wrote an article called *Polyvagal Theory and Peek-a-boo: How the Therapeutic Pas de Deux Heals Attachment Trauma*. That article is in the journal *Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*. In 2016, I wrote *Polyvagal Theory in Practice*, which was published in *Counseling Today* and is available on their website. In 2021, *Counseling Today* published *The Neuroscience of Healing Multigenerational Trauma Through Body-based Practices*, which I wrote with Anne Contee, a long-time couples counselor, yoga teacher and Ayurvedic practitioner originally from India who learned of our partner practices and asked to study with us. The partner practices focus on three polyvagal-informed interactions: client/therapist, child/parent, lovers.

Therapeutic Dances

I invite you to think about how the therapeutic relationship can be like an ideal infant/parent relationship:

- Clients receive support.
- Reflective listening invites clients' sharing, like parents' mirroring of their infants' movements and sounds. This mirroring invites further expression of movement and sounds.
- When clients feel they have lost connection, they can feel distress like babies do when they sense the absence of their parents.

Family Dances

In using the partner practices with families, first the parents do a practice with the counselor while the children watch. This begins to shift parents' multi-generational trauma patterning. Children like seeing this. Then the parents learn to practice with their children.

Children's oppositional behavior begins to be valued for its role in individuation. Oppositional behavior helps infants identify themselves as separate capable beings.

Romantic Dances

There are specific practices for romantic partners. Those evolved from my years of inviting couples into palm-to-palm experiments. These practices help partners feel when the romantic dance is triggering oppositional infant urges. When infant urges arise, counselors can work with one romantic partner at a time. The other partner does what we call *Not My Side of the Street*. This facilitates one partner witnessing the

healing work done by the other. When we check in with partners who are witnessing, they often say how relieved they feel that someone can help their lover.

Why Chi for Two Now?

In our world today, we recognize the need for co-regulation. *Chi for Two* partner practices can help counselors have practical polyvagal-informed tools. Our practice Push is featured in Miller and Beeson's *The Neuroeducation Toolbox: Practical Translations of Neuroscience in Counseling and Psychotherapy*.

The partner practices synthesize core principles from many trauma healing modalities: Progressive Relaxation (a staple in the early versions of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy); Mindfulness (key in Dialectical Behavior Therapy); Contralateral Movement (key in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing); Titration and Pendulation (concepts from Somatic Experiencing); The scientific value of a measurable protocol named by Van der Kolk in *The Body Keeps the Score*.



My colleagues and I are honored to be part of the creation and development of this method. It is fun to share with you that this method was presented and received with great enthusiasm in South Korea, Israel and Australia as well as in the US. We are happy to celebrate this accomplishment's origination in Georgia!

Accanto Health 2022 Symposium offers professionals the opportunity to learn from experts in the field to better apply best-practice care for patients and their families. With a multidisciplinary team of speakers, the Symposium aims to define treatment consideration for diverse eating disorder populations. Provides up to 15 CEs.

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Angela Feeser

LPCA Gives Insightful Presentation at NCA Annual Convention

**Angela Feeser, LPC, CPCS,
President 2021–2022**

**Carolyn Ramp, LPC, NCE, ACS, CPCS
President 2019–2020**

LPCA of GA gave a presentation entitled, *Navigating Mental Health and Wellness for Your Workplace*, at the National Club Association (NCA) Annual Convention in May 2022. NCA is an association for private clubs and their boards that advances the interests of the private club community through advocacy, insightful education, and governance best practices. It represents 3,500 private clubs nationwide and is the only organization that actively lobbies Congress on the industry's behalf.

The initial request was to present information that the leaders in attendance could use at their clubs to better serve their employees and members. Currently they have approximately 350,000 members and

90,000 employees. This left room for a variety of topics and techniques. However, given a time frame of 75 minutes, the decision was made to focus on the impact the pandemic had in loss and grief, differentiating between the two terms, how to identify symptoms and behaviors, and how to take appropriate action to help employees.

Traditionally, when we are asked to say what's our first thought when we hear the word "loss," we think of death. Other types of loss that surfaced during the pandemic were the loss of safety, trust, security, financial security, connectedness, health, status, friends, faith, appearance, and freedom. The impact of the overwhelming feeling of consistent loss had a tremendous impact on the workforce.

The signs and symptoms of focus were those that can typically be missed or misinterpreted such as difficulty (or inability) concentrating, forgetting tasks, withdrawal from peers or workforce, physical



Carolyn Ramp and Angela Feeser Presenting at the NCA Annual Convention

appearance, and affect or non-verbals. Others worthy of attention were quality and quantity of sleep, change in eating habits, and intolerance to activity or overstimulation.

Finally, what are the appropriate responses from management? Most important is communication; to listen and receive. That involves focusing on a true willingness to hear what the employee is saying and listening with your heart. Validate and normalize the employee by being present in the conversation and attentive of what they are sharing. Lastly, create a safe space for sharing and for keeping the information confidential.

After establishing this foundation, the group was presented with a case scenario to work through to apply the information. It was refreshing that many of the leaders in attendance shared what they had already implemented to help the mental health and wellness of their workforce over the last year. The presentation was well received, and many attendees felt the information gave them a new perspective with which to assist their employees.

What Moving Taught Me

**Dr. Natalie Ford, LPC, CPCS, ACS, CAMS-IV
Northern District Member**



As I packed up my home of 17 to years to relocate, I realized just how much stuff I had accumulated over the years. I knew I had some clutter, but I wasn't a pack rat—was I?

In psychology, we talk about the Johari Window. The window allows us to recognize that we all have blindspots. Sometimes others see what we fail to see ourselves (such as the clutter in my house that I saw as treasures but others saw as junk or stuff). There are also times that neither we nor others see truths about ourselves...like all of the things I found in my attic while rummaging around.

What I've learned is that I want to be more self-aware and others-aware. I don't want to get so comfortable in my surroundings that I fail to see the clutter or even the junk. I want to be aware of the "junk" in my life, even when it is painful. It is only through the realization of my flaws that I can confess and begin to deal with them.

Too often, we fail to take inventory of our lives. Our stuff becomes so commonplace, we no longer see the potential harm it may bring. Since cleaning out the physical clutter in my life, I feel more relaxed and at ease...how much more would this be true if I worked on the negative cognitions and other psychological baggage I carry every day? How much more if I spent as much time eradicating the breaches in my integrity as I did the material things in my home?

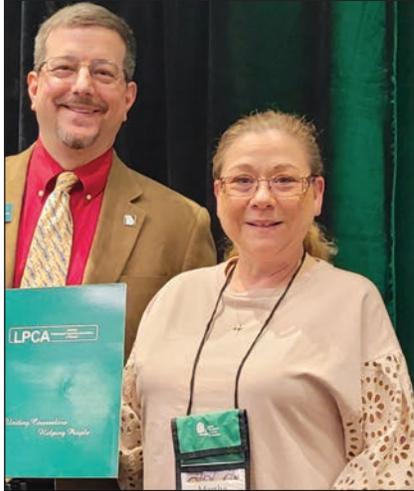
So, it's time to take spring (or summer) cleaning to a whole new level. It's time to clean out the cobwebs in our minds and deal with those hidden areas that we try so desperately to avoid. Just as I first had to see the clutter in my house, I first have to acknowledge the junk in my thoughts and in my mind...then the real work begins. We teach our clients to do this, but we need to actively do the same.

Dr. Natalie Ford is the author of *Grace-based Counseling and Seeking Answers—Finding Peace: Loving and Losing Someone with Mental Illness*.

Congratulations to all of the Lucky Winners of One Year Free LPCA of GA Membership!



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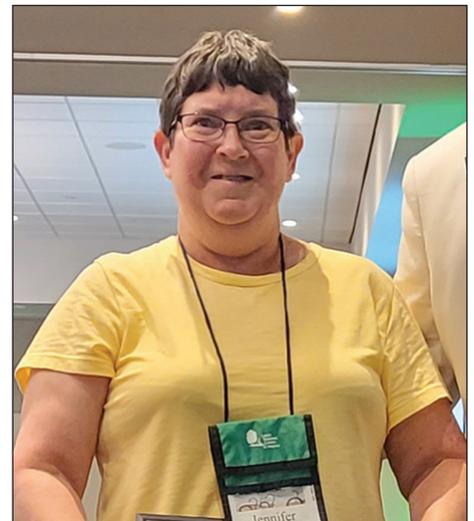
Denise McLord



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Why is the Interstate Compact for Counselors Important?

Dr. Tommy Black, LPC, CPCS

The Interstate Compact for Counselors is extremely important as we find our world in the midst of a radical paradigm

shift. Over the past 20 years, nearly every major industry has shifted to a consumer focus. We have on demand entertainment including television and movies (Netflix, Hulu, Disney+, etc.) and video games, on demand transportation (Uber, Lyft), on demand banking and finance/ investing (Sofi, banking apps, investment apps, etc.) on demand shopping and delivery (Amazon, Walmart.com, Etsy, etc.) and even on demand food and drinks (UberEats, Door dash, etc.)

Until Covid-19, the only major industry in the United States that had not shifted to this consumer centric, on demand model was healthcare, including mental/behavioral health. However, since the global pandemic, the resistance in traditional medicine/therapy has not only dissipated and allowed us to shift to this model, it has done so with amazing enthusiasm and swiftness.

As technology has become more ubiquitous, we are now able to meet the needs and demands of our clients/patients in ways which are more beneficial and timely for them and their concerns. They no longer have to drive across town, or in rural areas several hours each way, for a therapy session. They can do so from home, or work, or even while on vacation.

In addition, our society has become increasingly mobile with more and more people opting to move from city to city and state to state on a much larger scale than ever before. Technology allows us to keep in touch with family and friends across the globe as if they were sitting next to us.

While technology has been amazing in most respects, the constant influx of information instantly has contributed to the significant increases in recent years of anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders. In addition, the incessant use of devices has contributed to social isolation and less meaningful social interaction. This, of course, has been significantly exacerbated by the global pandemic.

Finally, it has been nearly 21 years since the terrorist attacks on the United States on 9/11. Our military deployments, casualties, and deaths have escalated significantly in response to these attacks. It is impossible to capture the costs to human life in a wide range of efforts over two decades in dozens of countries. In post-9/11 military operations, the United States lost 7,074 troops killed in action and another 53,303 wounded. A further 1.8 million post-9/11 veterans have reported service-connected disabilities to the Department of Veterans Affairs. These statistics grow exponentially when we include the friends and family members of the service members deployed, injured, or killed. The sacrifices and the next several decades of chronic mental and physical health issues are beyond significant.

The Interstate Compact for Counselors is important for all these reasons.

There is, and will continue to be for the foreseeable future, a shortage of counselors in the United States. Along with this shortage, counselors are not evenly distributed. The majority of counselors are in urban centers while rural areas are lucky if they have any mental health professionals within a one hour driving radius.

The Interstate Compact for Counselors allows improved access to therapy as counselors can provide services to those living in areas with no support or access to mental health services.

The Interstate Compact for Counselors allows for individuals with limitations which inhibit their ability to physically come to a clinic or office to receive counseling in the comfort and convenience of their homes.

The Interstate Compact for Counselors allows for continuity of care for patients/clients who move from one state to another. They no longer have to spend weeks to find, schedule, and then connect with a new therapist if their new state and previous state are a members of the Compact.

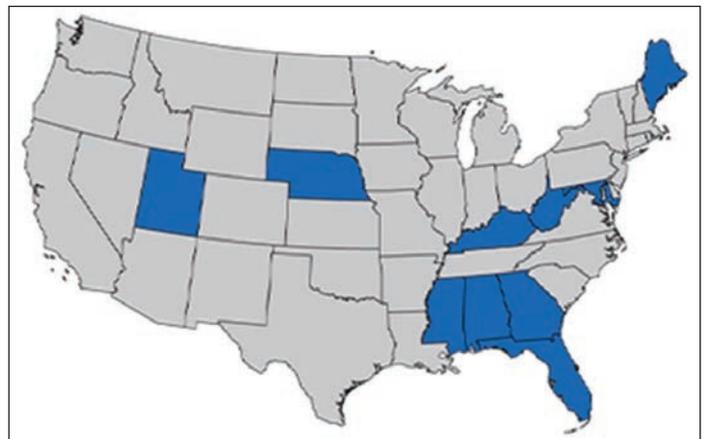
The Interstate Compact for Counselors further shifts the focus from provider-centric to consumer/patient-centric and moves our profession more in line with societal expectations of on-demand/as needed services.

The Interstate Compact for Counselors has the ability to significantly reduce emergency room visits (and thus costs to patients as well as the healthcare system) by providing more on-demand, as needed services as well as by improving continuity of care for those who move to another state.

The Interstate Compact for Counselors improves availability of licensure for military members and their spouses, as well as other individuals in highly mobile careers which require them to move more often than is typical of other professions. The current system of individual state licensure with limited reciprocity or endorsement often takes months, sometimes more, before they are licensed and able to work in their new state. This hurts not only the military and mobile families, but also the community as highly qualified and credentialed Counselors are not able to provide services until they are licensed in the new state.

The Interstate Compact for Counselors will help us close the gap between the current availability of counselors with the perpetually increasing need for therapy. As our society continues to remove the stigma of mental health needs, more and more of our neighbors, friends, family members, and service members will seek counseling. The Compact helps us prepare to better meet this need.

The importance of the Interstate Compact for Counselors cannot be understated. Our society has changed to highly mobile, information rich, 24/hour news cycle, mental health conscience, and consumer-centric. The Interstate Compact for Counselors allows Counselors to rise to meet the new challenges which have developed as a result of this shift.



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**1997–1998 LPCA President Karen Wolfe, center,
with her partner Barbara, left,
and 1995–1996 LPCA President Joel Bagby, right.**



**Convention Welcome with LPCA Presidents
Jo Abney 2013–2014, Karen Wolfe 1997–1998, Joel Bagby 1995–1996, Bryan Stephans 2022–2023,
Angela Feeser 2021–2022, André Marria 2003–2004, Carolyn Ramp 2019–2020, Shelley Hankins 2009–2010.**

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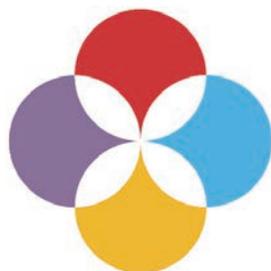
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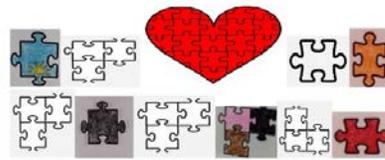
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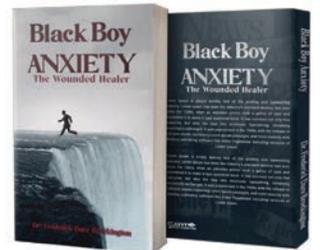
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For further information or speaking engagements, Dr. Brockington can be reached by email: drdarebrockington@gmail.com or call: 770-896-4226. For updates follow him on Facebook @fbrockington, TikTok @drdareshow and subscribe his Youtube channel https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCZn3SYkpzpoVVgj690_-gw

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