

33rd Annual Forensic Rights and Treatment Conference

***Contemporary Issues
Impacting Forensic Services***

December 10-11, 2025



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Division of Behavioral
Healthcare Education

College of Medicine

WELCOME

Greetings to Our Esteemed Colleagues:

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the 2025 PA Forensic Rights and Treatment Conference! If you haven't heard yet, we have a significant change in leadership. Donna McNelis, the co-chair and founder of this conference, has retired from Drexel after 38 years. Her knowledge, passion and dedication will be sorely missed.

Nevertheless – we move forward! This year, we are offering a variety of educational sessions, including plenary presentations on cultural considerations, hip hop counseling, traumatic brain injuries and fetal alcohol syndrome. Our workshops are also widely varied, including sessions on trauma-informed care, intimate partner violence, peer supports, motivational interviewing, HIV linkages, neurodivergence, aging in prison and several others. Additionally, we will celebrate award nominees on the first day, honoring our worthy awards recipients.

As it has been the last several years, this year's conference will take place virtually on Zoom. Every session will be recorded so you can watch them after the conference at your convenience and earn extra continuing education credits. Recordings will be available through December 31, 2025, giving you plenty of time to view sessions and earn up to 20.75 hours of CE credits.

We are looking forward to another successful event and hope you will join us for our 33rd year!

Sincerely,

Chris Owens and William Holt
Conference Co-chairs

PA FORENSIC RIGHTS AND TREATMENT CONFERENCE

Who Should Attend

- Clinical and support staff, program managers, advocates and administrators.
- Officials and officers in corrections, probation/parole and prisons/jails.
- Specialized mental health, drug and alcohol program providers.
- Counselors, social workers and educators working in all systems.
- Other constituents interested in this area of behavioral healthcare.

Learning Objectives

1. Define culture, cultural misinformation and cultural competence in the context of your life and work
2. Provide practical strategies and resources for law enforcement agencies to support concussion management of their personnel, including early intervention and a graduated return-to-duty protocol.
3. Integrate hip hop counseling theory to enhance client engagement, promote self-expression and facilitate healing in therapeutic practice.
4. Explain why identifying an FASD is important in working with those involved in the corrections system.

Conference Planning Committee

Chris Owens, Drexel University/BHE
Conference Co-chair

Greg Plotica, PA DOC

William A. Holt,
Conference Co-chair

Yolanda Ramirez, Drexel
University/BHE

Danny Beauchamp, SE Regional MH
Services Coordination Office

Tamara Ramos, PA OMHSAS

Stacy Condie, Allegheny County

Jason Snyder, RCPA





Karin Gladney, Drexel University/BHE

Danielle Tedesco, PA DOC

Jessica Penn Shires, PA DOC

Alisha Tull, PA OMHSAS

CREDIT INFORMATION

<p>Psychologists (APA) - Up to 20.75 CE credit hours for Psychologists will be awarded. BHTEN is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. BHTEN maintains responsibility for this program and its content.</p>	
<p>LSW/LCSW/LPC/LMFT (PA SBSWE Licensed Social Workers in Pennsylvania): Drexel University College of Medicine, Behavioral Healthcare Education is a preapproved provider of continuing education for Social Workers and Clinical Social Workers. This program is being offered for up to 20.75 hours of continuing education.</p>	<p>Licensed Social Workers in Pennsylvania</p>
<p>PA Educators Act 48: Drexel University College of Medicine, Behavioral Healthcare Education is recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education to offer continuing education credits under Act 48 guidelines. Drexel University College of Medicine, Behavioral Healthcare Education adheres to Act 48 Continuing Education Guidelines. PA educators will receive a maximum of 20.75 hours of credit for attending this complete program.</p>	
<p>CPRP: Drexel University College of Medicine, Behavioral Healthcare Education is approved by the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (Provider #O10374) to Practitioners. Drexel University College of Medicine, Behavioral Healthcare Education maintains responsibility for the program and its content. This program is being offered for up to 20.75 hours of continuing education.</p>	
<p>CEU (IACET): Drexel University College of Medicine/Behavioral Healthcare Education has been accredited as an Authorized Provider by the International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Training (IACET), 1760 Old Meadow Road, Suite 500, McLean, VA 22102. In obtaining this approval, Drexel University College of Medicine/Behavioral Healthcare Education has demonstrated that it complies with the ANSI/ IACET Standard which is widely recognized as the Standard of good practice internationally. As a result of their Authorized Provider accreditation status Drexel University College of Medicine/Behavioral Healthcare Education is authorized to offer IACET CEUs for its programs that qualify under the ANSI/ IACET Standard. The Drexel University College of Medicine/Behavioral Healthcare Education is authorized by IACET to offer 2.075 CEUs for this program.</p>	

FACULTY LISTING

Rhonelle Bruder, MSc
HEAL Trafficking
Harvard Faculty of Arts & Sciences

Jaclyn B. Caccese, PhD
Ohio State University

Angela Chew, LCSW
Deerfield Behavioral Health

Susan Connor, OTD, OTR/L, CCHP
Temple University

Mary Dorman, NBC-HWC
President, Dorman Development Group

Dan Dubovsky, MSW
FASD Specialist, Independent Contractor

Jaymes Fairfax-Columbo JD, PhD
Private Practitioner, Jaymes Columbo
Forensics

Randy Kulesza III, MA, LPC
SCI Albion

Dan Krupinsky, BA
Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumers'
Association

Tyanna Marge, CRS, CFRS, CPS, CCHW
Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumers'
Association

James P. Norris, PhD
University of the Cumberlands

Chris Owens, MA, LPC, CCTP, Member of
MINT
Drexel University

Maximilian K. Paladina
Pre-Medicine & Clinical Psychology
Student, Franciscan University of
Steubenville

Katrina Putnam, MA, LSW
SCI Albion

Judge Victor Reyes (Ret.)
10th Judicial District, Pueblo, Colorado

Joseph Santos, M.A.
SCI Albion

Elicia Stein, PsyD
PA Dept. of Corrections

Amanda M Stylianou, PhD, LCSW
HEAL Trafficking

Odessa Summers, MSW
Action Wellness

Taylor Tharp, BA
SCI Albion

PLENARY SESSIONS

Plenary I

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

9:30-10:30 a.m.

Cultural Considerations When Engaging Clients, Victims and Other System Actors

Judge Victor Reyes (Ret.)

10th Judicial District, Pueblo, Colorado

Engaging and communicating effectively with other people is at the core of the work we do. Failure to consider another's culture, race and gender may lead to distrust and a non-functional relationship. By reflecting on the role that cultural misinformation and our own mindsets play in this interaction, we can approach people with more sensitivity and awareness.

About the Presenter

Since 2016, Judge Reyes has facilitated international and nationwide trainings to a variety of groups and organizations on issues related to mindfulness, the effects of vicarious trauma on judicial officers and compassionate judicial leadership. Also, he has participated in judicial well-being and judicial integrity webinars sponsored by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime. Judge Reyes has trained judges from Costa Rica, South Korea, South Africa, the United States Army, the United States Immigration Judges and others across the United States on the issue of judicial well-being and more specifically, tools to increase resilience. Judge Reyes is a certified life coach and master life coach.

For the past seven years, Judge Reyes has facilitated discussions on issues related to self-respect and self-compassion at the Youth Offender System, in addition to a weekly life skills session for incarcerated people and yoga at La Vista Correctional Facility-Colorado Department of Corrections. He also leads yoga/mindfulness classes and the Federal Bureau of Prisons-Camp, STAGES Program at United States Penitentiary in Florence and ADMAX (Supermax) as well as several venues in Pueblo. Judge Reyes is a graduate of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia and Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, D.C.

Plenary II

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

10:45-11:45 a.m.

Addressing Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBIs) and Mental Health in Law Enforcement

Jaclyn B. Caccese, PhD

Ohio State University

This presentation will explore the prevalence, impact and management of TBIs and mental health issues among law enforcement officers. It will cover research findings, diagnostic criteria, and best practices for concussion management and recovery. The presentation aims to raise awareness, improve education and enhance clinical care for officers dealing with these critical health challenges.

About the Presenter

Jaclyn B. Caccese, PhD, FACSM, is an associate professor in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences at The Ohio State University and a faculty member in the University's Chronic Brain Injury Program. Her research focuses on traumatic brain injury (TBI), sensorimotor integration and head acceleration events in both sport and tactical populations. She leads multiple federally funded studies, including a Department of Defense-supported project investigating the incidence, mechanisms and long-term effects of TBIs in law enforcement officers.

Dr. Caccese is internationally recognized for her expertise in concussion research and has contributed to CDC reports to Congress, National Academies of Sciences workshops, and the development of return-to-duty protocols now adopted by law enforcement agencies across the U.S. She has over 75 peer-reviewed publications and her work has been featured in over 100 media outlets, helping reshape policy and practice around head trauma in both youth athletes and first responders.

Plenary III

Thursday, December 11, 2025

9:30-10:30 a.m.

The Use of Hip Hop Counseling Theory in Clinical Practice

James P. Norris, PhD
University of the Cumberlands

This dynamic session begins with an overview of hip hop's history, emphasizing its origins as a creative response to systemic oppression and a tool for self-expression and resilience among urban youth. The connection between hip hop and mental health is examined, showcasing its ability to foster emotional expression, community connectedness and personal empowerment. Key elements of hip hop — MCing, DJing B-boying, graffiti art and knowledge of self — are explored as therapeutic interventions that align with clients' lived experiences. Empirical evidence supporting the integration of hip hop in counseling highlights its effectiveness in improving engagement and outcomes, particularly for marginalized populations. Lastly, we will delve into hip hop counseling theory, which merges cultural competence with evidence-based practices, emphasizing authenticity, creativity and holistic healing. By utilizing this culturally relevant approach, clinicians can foster trust and empower clients to rewrite their narratives.

About the Presenter

Dr. James P. Norris received his Master of Arts in existential-phenomenology psychology degree in 2009 from Seattle University and PhD in counselor education and supervision from the University of the Cumberlands' CACREP accredited doctoral program in 2022. He is an assistant professor at the University of the Cumberlands. He has worked in a variety of clinical settings since 2009 and is a licensed mental health counselor in the state of Washington and a licensed professional counselor in the states of Arizona and California. Dr. Norris has served in administration and leadership in the community mental health clinic he developed in 2012 in Seattle, Washington, and he has been teaching in higher education for the past two years. Dr. Norris has been in private practice since 2018, where he discovered that most of the traditional counseling approaches lacked the cultural nuance and relevance to connect with communities of color. This has inspired him to pursue and develop a framework specifically designed for effectively working with marginalized groups through hip hop and creativity. His primary research interests are in hip hop, creativity and counseling theories. Dr. Norris has published and presented on the integration hip hop in counselor education for BIPOC-identified males, hip hop and counseling practice, and multicultural issues in counseling.

Plenary IV

Thursday, December 11, 2025

10:45-11:45 a.m.

Frustrated With Individuals Who Don't Respond to Typical Approaches?

Dan Dubovsky, MSW

FASD Specialist; Independent Contractor

There are many individuals with whom we work who say that they know what they need to do to stay out of trouble and keep messing up. They repeatedly break probation or parole, don't seem to benefit from typical treatments such as CBT, TFCBE or motivational interviewing, and are often viewed as being non-compliant, unmotivated and having no conscience. This presentation examines why the behaviors of many of these individuals may be reflections of brain processing issues due to prenatal alcohol exposure. The manifestation of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) in behaviors is discussed and modifications to approaches are described.

About the Presenter

Dan Dubovsky has worked for over 50 years in the field of behavioral health as a direct care worker in residential treatment and a therapist in residential, outpatient and hospital settings. He has been involved in FASD for over 35 years. For 14 years he was the FASD specialist for the U.S. FASD Center for Excellence. For his work in FASD, his son Bill has been his mentor and best teacher.

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

All times are in Eastern Time

Time	Event	Presenters
8:45 a.m.	Welcome & Overview	Chris Owens
9-9:30 a.m.	Welcome from OMHSAS	OMHSAS
9:30-10:30 a.m.	Plenary I Cultural Considerations When Engaging Clients, Victims and Other System Actors	Judge Victor Reyes, JD (retired)
10:30-10:45 a.m.	BREAK	
10:45-11:45 a.m.	Plenary II Addressing Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBIs) and Mental Health in Law Enforcement	Jaclyn B. Caccese, PhD
11:45 a.m.-1 p.m.	Awards and Lunch	
1-2:15 p.m.	Concurrent Workshop Sessions I	
2:15-2:30 p.m.	BREAK	
2:30-3:45 p.m.	Concurrent Workshop Sessions II	

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Thursday, December 11, 2025

All times are in Eastern Time

8:45 a.m.	Welcome	William Holt
9-9:30 a.m.	Welcome from DOC	Laurel R. Harry, DCJ, Secretary of Corrections
9:30-10:30 a.m.	Plenary III The Use of Hip-Hop Counseling Theory in Clinical Practice	James P Norris, PhD
10:30-10:45 a.m.	BREAK	
10:45-11:45 a.m.	Plenary IV Frustrated With Individuals Who Don't Respond to Typical Approaches?	Dan Dubovsky, MSW
11:45 a.m.-1 p.m.	LUNCH	
1- 2:15 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions III	
2:15-2:30 p.m.	BREAK	
2:30-3:45 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions IV	
3:45-4 p.m.	Closing Remarks, Evaluations, CE Validation Form	

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Wednesday, December 10, 2025
Concurrent Workshops Sessions I
1-2:15 p.m.

W01 - Honest Self-Reflection: Understanding the Characters of the Brain for Better Decision-Making

Judge Victor Reyes (retired)

This presentation proposes the integration of "whole brain living" principles, a neuroscience-based methodology developed by Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, into mental health practice and personal wellness. By understanding and consciously engaging the four distinct character profiles within our brains, individuals can develop greater emotional regulation, resilience and overall mental well-being. This session will provide practical tools and experiential exercises to empower attendees to navigate daily stressors, foster healthier relationships, and cultivate inner peace through the application of whole brain living.

W02 - Bridging the Gap: Strengthening Forensic Services Through Peer Support and Workforce Development

Tyanna Marge, CRS, CFRS, CPS, CCHW & Dan Krupinsky, BA

This workshop will explore how forensic peer support and workforce development can address critical shortages in forensic services. Presenters will discuss the integration of peer specialists into forensic teams, training pathways and successful implementation strategies in underserved areas.

W03 - Trauma Informed Debriefs: What, Why and How?

Mary Dorman, NBC-HWC

The workshop will blend lecture and interactivity to help professionals develop skills to share difficult experiences without unintentionally transferring distress to others. Low impact debriefing was developed by TEND Academy to assist professionals process difficult stories and images that they may encounter. The topics covered in the workshop include reviewing the concept of vicarious trauma, developing personalized regulation skills and applying the four-step low impact debrief process.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Wednesday, December 10, 2025
Concurrent Workshops Sessions 2
2:30-3:45 p.m.

W11 - Motivational Interviewing: Essential Elements

Chris Owens, MA, LPC, CCTP, Member of MINT

Motivational interviewing (MI) has long been established as a clinical style that leads to better engagement and positive outcomes. Before MI techniques can be utilized, however, helpers must first embrace vital, foundational aspects of the approach. This training will cover factors that are commonly seen in behavior change efforts, including awareness, ambivalence and relapse. Additionally, the underlying philosophy, or spirit, of MI will be emphasized, along with other important helper factors. This training will involve interactive applications of essential MI elements and can serve as an introduction to MI for beginning helpers, as well as a refresher for seasoned practitioners. (**NOTE:** This is a **3-hour** pre-recorded session.)

W12 - An Exploration of the Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI) as a Predictor of Suicide Risk Among Incarcerated Individuals in the PA DOC

Elicia Stein, PsyD and Maximilian K. Paladina

This presentation will provide an overview of the personality assessment inventory (PAI) and its use in the correctional setting, followed by a focus on new research exploring its application for use in suicide prevention. We will review a multiple logistic regression analysis that provides statistically founded insight into response patterns that predict both completed suicides and suicide attempts. Additionally, we will provide an interpretation of the results based in established psychological theory and discuss implications for future prevention of suicide in Pennsylvania state prisons.

W13 - Breaking the Cycle: Jail-Based Case Management and HIV Linkage Programs

Odessa Summers, MSW

This workshop explores the impact of jail-based case management (MCM) models like the Philadelphia Linkage Program (PLP) on individuals living with HIV in correctional settings. The session will focus on strategies for engaging incarcerated individuals in care, reducing recidivism, and facilitating access to essential medical and social services upon release. Attendees will learn about the effectiveness of public-private partnerships in breaking the cycle of incarceration and improving health outcomes for vulnerable populations.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Thursday, December 11, 2025
Concurrent Workshops Sessions III
1-2:15 p.m.

T21 - Decriminalizing Behavioral Health Challenges via the Sequential Intercept Model

Jaymes Fairfax-Columbo, JD, PhD

This presentation explores the predominant approach to decriminalizing behavioral health in America: the Sequential Intercept Model (SIM). First, it reviews the SIM's Intercepts, including their distinctive foci/hallmark interventions. Second, it reviews the SIM's effectiveness. Third, it explores why the SIM works, arguing that the SIM's effectiveness is due to employment of six active ingredients: (1) therapeutic jurisprudence, (2) positive use of stakeholder discretion, (3) behaviorism, (4) prevention science, (5) interdisciplinary collaboration, and (6) empowerment principles.

T22 - Implementing a Protocol in Corrections to Identify Youth With a Probable FASD

Dan Dubovsky, MSW

The estimated prevalence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) in the overall population is 1 in 20. In our systems of care, it is likely higher than that. Therefore, there are many individuals with an FASD in our corrections system. The vast majority are unrecognized and often misdiagnosed. They typically fail in our usual programs. This session describes a protocol implemented by a juvenile probation office to identify youth with a probable FASD and modify approaches accordingly. The benefits and barriers in utilizing this approach are examined.

T23 - Neurodivergence in Corrections: An In-Depth Look at the Neurodevelopmental Residential Treatment Unit

Joseph Santos, MA, Unit Manager, Albion; Taylor Tharp, BA; Randy Kulesza III, MA, LPC; Katrina Putnam, MA, LSW

The Neurodevelopmental Residential Treatment Unit (NRTU) is an SCI-Albion housing unit with specific focus on treating individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disabilities and other serious mental health conditions. The unit team and officers have adopted several novel adaptations to promote wellness, skill-building and self-efficacy for a neurodivergent population. Our presentation outlines the evidence-based interventions used to establish and promote social, communication and personal development in order to support successful re-entry to the community.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Thursday, December 11, 2025
Concurrent Workshops Sessions IV
2:30-3:45 p.m.

T24 - Growing Old Behind Bars
Susan Connor, OTD, OTR/L, CCHP

The U.S. prison population is aging, and rates of dementia among inmates are expected to rise significantly due to prevalent health risk factors. This growing trend presents major challenges for correctional systems. This session will explore the impact of prison environments on individuals with dementia, the challenges faced by staff and institutions, and practical strategies for managing behavioral symptoms from both front line and administrative perspectives.

T25 – Trauma-Informed Care Works in Forensics
Angela Chew, LCSW

This presentation will review the development of a forensic LTSR program using a trauma-informed model from the beginning. It delves into the processes, successes and challenges of the program and shares data collected along the way regarding adult males experiencing serious mental illness, co-occurring substance abuse and criminal justice involvement. The presentation will share anecdotal stories and will provide some foundational tools to establish a trauma-informed forensic program.

**T26 - The Intersection of Intimate Partner Violence, Coercive Control and Trafficking:
Implications for Forensic Practice**

Amanda M Stylianou, PhD, LCSW, and Rhonelle Bruder, MSc

This workshop explores the complex overlap between intimate partner violence (IPV), coercive control and human trafficking, with a focus on forensic implications. Drawing on case studies and current research, we will examine how power and control dynamics manifest across these forms of abuse. Attendees will learn how to identify indicators of trafficking within IPV cases, avoid misclassification and strengthen survivor-centered responses in forensic and clinical settings.

REGISTRATION AND FEES

Registration Is Now Open!

Conference Fees:

You will have the opportunity on the registration screen to choose the full two-day conference or one of the individual conference days.

Full Two-Day Conference: \$125

One-Day Conference: \$75

- Credit Card Payments: [Visit our secure registration portal](#)
- If you are unable to register online with a payment, contact us at bheweb@drexel.edu or 215.991.8870.

NOTE: If you are a presenter or award recipient, your conference experience is free. Just select “presenter” or “awardee” at registration.

Refunds will be made up to five (5) days prior to the conference, minus a \$25 administrative fee. All refund requests must be emailed to us at bheweb@drexel.edu. Substitute attendees are permitted with approval from the BHE team prior to the conference. If you do not cancel and do not attend, you are still responsible for payment.

Though the conference ends on December 11, you will have the opportunity to accumulate more credits by viewing additional concurrent sessions after the conference. All sessions will be recorded and will be available for your viewing until December 31, 2025. Your continuing education certificate will be emailed to you by the end of January 2026.

For more information, and any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at bheweb@drexel.edu or call us at 215.991.8870. You can also visit the [BHE conferences website](#) for updates and announcements.

We hope to see you in December!

The Forensic Conference Planning Committee

