

# C&R NEWS

Counseling & Rehabilitation Program Newsletter

(Red brick pathways leading to a metal and brick gate. Behind the gate lie trees and a red brick building)

## BIPOC Mental Health Month: A Time for Awareness, Action, and Advocacy



July marks National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, also recognized as BIPOC Mental Health Month. This annual observance serves as a crucial reminder of the unique mental health challenges experienced by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. It is a time for reflection, education, and meaningful action to promote equity in mental health care (NAMI, n.d.).

BIPOC Mental Health Month was formally established in 2008 to honor the legacy of Bebe Moore Campbell, an author, advocate, and co-founder of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Urban Los Angeles. Her tireless efforts to dismantle stigma and promote access to culturally competent mental health services continue to inspire organizations and individuals nationwide (NAMI, n.d.).

**24/7 Mental Health Support from the Office of Student Health and Well Being at USC: 833-664-2854**

## This issue:

BIPOC Mental Health Month

PAGE 01-02

Faculty Spotlight

PAGE 03

C&R Students Join SOM Committees

PAGE 04-05

Lunch and Learn

PAGE 06

High In Plain Sight

PAGE 07

Wellness Corner

PAGE 08



(Students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

# Save the Date

August 1st, 2025:

Ollie Johnson Health fair

August 11th, 2025:

Current Drug Trends Training

August 13th, 2025:

Class Payment Deadline

August 15th, 2025:

Student Orientation

August 19th, 2025:

First Day of Class

August 26th, 2025:

Lunch and Learn

September 25th, 2025:

Lunch and Learn

October 21st, 2025:

Lunch and Learn

October 24th, 2025:

Speaker Series

October 25th, 2025:

Learning Community Saturday

CHECK OUT OUR SOCIALS



## BIPOC Mental Health Month

### Why This Month Matters

Systemic inequalities, historical trauma, cultural stigma, and underrepresentation in mental health professions all contribute to disparities in mental health outcomes for BIPOC individuals (SAMHSA, 2023; APA, n.d.). Research consistently shows that members of BIPOC communities are:

- Less likely to receive mental health treatment than their white counterparts (APA, n.d.)
- More likely to experience misdiagnosis or inadequate care (Snowden, 2001)
- Disproportionately impacted by socioeconomic factors that affect mental health, such as housing instability, employment discrimination, and access to healthcare (WHO, 2014; KFF, 2023)

Within the University of South Carolina's Counseling and Rehabilitation Program, we recognize that mental health is deeply personal—and deeply impacted by social and cultural identity. This month, we reaffirm our commitment to training mental health professionals who understand and honor the lived experiences of diverse communities.

### How We Can Make a Difference

As students, educators, practitioners, and allies, we all play a role in advancing mental health equity. Here are a few ways to get involved this month:

- Engage with BIPOC-led mental health organizations such as The Loveland Foundation, Therapy for Black Girls, or the Native American Health Center.
- Attend webinars or workshops focused on cultural humility, racial trauma, and inclusive therapeutic practices (NCTSN, n.d.; APA, n.d.).
- Support peer and community-based resources that prioritize healing in BIPOC spaces.
- Listen and learn from voices within BIPOC communities about what healing looks like on their terms.

**24/7 Mental Health Support from the Office of Student Health and Well Being at USC: 833-664-2854**





(students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

# Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Christine Sacco-Bene Begins Term as ARCA President on July 1<sup>st</sup>

We're happy to share that Dr. Christine Sacco-Bene, Clinical Associate Professor and Program Director of USC's Counseling & Rehabilitation Program, began her term as President of the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA) on July 1, 2025.

Dr. Sacco-Bene has been involved with ARCA for several years, including serving as Public Relations & Awareness Director. She also brings experience from her time on the board of the Lift Disability Network.

Her appointment reflects her steady commitment to the field of rehabilitation counseling and her ongoing work in areas like disability inclusion, leadership, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Earlier this year, she was named Rehabilitation Counselor Educator of the Year—a meaningful recognition of her efforts in and outside the classroom.



Congratulations to Dr. Christine Sacco-Bene for beginning term as ARCA president

## Vision for the Year Ahead

In her first message as President, Dr. Sacco-Bene expressed gratitude to outgoing President Paige Dunlap and highlighted the ARCA board's volunteer-driven work on key initiatives and difficult decisions—including adjustments to dues to sustain programming. She shared her excitement about embracing innovation, collaboration, and the evolving role of AI in rehabilitation counseling—paving the way for new programming, enhanced advocacy, and inclusive learning opportunities.



A graphic of the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association

## Dr. Sacco-Bene outlined several exciting upcoming initiatives, such as:

- A Virtual Jingle Run, Walk, Roll 5K to raise funds for ARCA student scholarships and foster community nationwide
- A Pre-conference Symposium preceding the 2026 ACA convention in Columbus, OH, to spotlight rehabilitation counseling scholarship and practice
- A Virtual Learning Institute featuring tracks on disability and research, designed to engage members and highlight disability expertise across counseling domains

**Join ARCA today to be a part of this dynamic network and drive positive change in our profession**



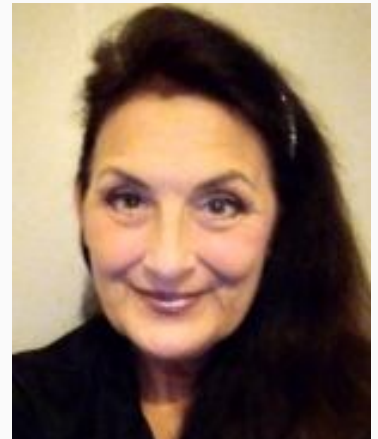
(students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

# C&R Students Join 2025-2026 School of Medicine Institutional Committees

The University of South Carolina’s Counseling and Rehabilitation Program proudly congratulates the following students who have been selected to serve on high-impact committees across the School of Medicine Columbia (SOMC). These appointments reflect both the caliber of our students and their commitment to leadership, advocacy, and continuous improvement in academic and student life.

## Honor Committee – Dawn Baylis

The **Honor Committee**, comprised of students and faculty, plays a vital role in upholding academic integrity. This committee not only educates peers about the USC Honor Code, but also supports a culture of ethical behavior across the School of Medicine Columbia. Our students serving on this committee help ensure that trust and accountability remain central to the educational experience.



Dawn Baylis



Nicholas Arroyave

## Wellness Promotion Committee – Nicholas Arroyave

Mental and physical well-being are foundational to academic and professional success. Students on the **Wellness Promotion Committee** collaborate with faculty and administration to develop and promote initiatives that enhance the wellness of all SOMC community members. From stress-relief programming to wellness resource campaigns, this committee helps create a healthier learning environment.

## Library Committee – Georgne Herring

Access to robust library services is critical for scholarly success. Students appointed to the **Library Committee** serve as liaisons between peers and the Director of Library Services, advising on key policy issues—including collection development and staffing. Their input ensures that resources remain relevant, inclusive, and responsive to evolving academic needs.



Georgne Herring





(students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

# C&R Students Join 2025-2026 School of Medicine Institutional Committees

## Women in Science and Medicine Committee – Catya Hunt

Representing voices on gender equity and inclusion, the Women in Science and Medicine (WiSM) Committee advises the Dean on issues affecting women students, faculty, and staff within SOMC. By participating in this committee, our students are directly shaping the policies and conversations that advance diversity and support for women in medicine and science.



Lindsey Veit

## Student Services Committee – Lindsey Veit

Our students on the Student Services Committee work alongside the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Career Advising to improve student life. Their advocacy enhances the SOMC experience by fostering collaboration, building community, and implementing opportunities that enrich both academic and co-curricular engagement.



Emily Kallis

## Information Technology Committee – Emily Kallis

Technology plays an essential role in learning and research. Students serving on the Information Technology Committee advise the Assistant Dean for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer on matters relating to educational tools, student computing needs, and the function of SOMC’s digital infrastructure. Their feedback helps ensure that SOMC’s IT systems support cutting-edge education and accessibility.

## Celebrating Our Future Leaders

These student committee members represent the best of USC’s Counseling and Rehabilitation Program—bringing fresh perspectives, empathy, and professionalism to the table. Their leadership not only contributes to the vitality of the School of Medicine Columbia, but also prepares them to be thoughtful, informed advocates in their future careers.

Please join us in recognizing and applauding their commitment to service, inclusion, and excellence!



(students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

# Elective Course: LGBTQ+ Issues in Counseling

Each semester, the Counseling and Rehabilitation program offers electives open to both C&R and other graduate students across the University. This month’s featured course is RCON 610: LGBT Issues in Counseling and Rehabilitation, which examines key issues in providing effective services to LGBTQ+ individuals.

Students will explore the impact of heterosexism and homophobia and develop strategies for serving this population. Topics include sexual orientation, LGBTQ+ identity development, multicultural identity, disability, and family dynamics. The course emphasizes practical skills for counselors, rehabilitation professionals, and other helping roles.

RCON 610 will be offered virtually on Tuesdays from 5:15–8:00 p.m. EST in Fall 2025. Open to all graduate students. For more information, call 803-216-3690 or email [rehab@uscmed.sc.edu](mailto:rehab@uscmed.sc.edu).

## Career Discovery Lunch and Learn: Inside Alpha Behavioral Health—Pathways to Practice

On Thursday, July 24, the program hosted Mara Jones, Executive Director of Alpha Behavioral Health Center for a 1 hour virtual Lunch and Learn session open to all Counseling and Rehabilitation students.



Mara Jones, Executive Director of Alpha Behavioral Health Center

Mara shared insight into Alpha’s mission, the diverse clinical roles within the agency, and internship opportunities for emerging counselors. Students learned about the ways in which this community-based agency is addressing substance use and behavioral health through prevention, intervention, and treatment services across Kershaw and Lee counties.

For additional information on the Alpha Behavioral Health Center and their provided services, [check out this link to their website.](#)







(students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

# High in Plain Sight: A FREE Training Developed by the Tri-County Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse

**YOU CAN'T STOP WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW**  
TALL COP SAYS  
**STOP**

## HIGH IN PLAIN SIGHT:

*Current Drug Trends*

NATIONAL PRESENTER  
OFFICER JERMAINE GALLOWAY

**"YOU CAN'T STOP WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW"**

**Monday, August 11, 2025 | 8:00 am - 1:00 pm**  
**Orangeburg County Conference Center**  
**1643 Russell St, Orangeburg, SC 29115**

Join us for the High in Plain Sight training, led by Jermaine Galloway, also known as "Tall Cop." This eye-opening session is designed to equip our community with the tools and knowledge to recognize substance abuse trends, drug concealment tactics, and warning signs in youth and adults.

Attendees will gain valuable insight into the latest trends in drug culture, including terminology, clothing, paraphernalia, and hiding techniques. The training will also cover strategies to engage in prevention and intervention effectively.

Whether you're on the front lines or supporting prevention efforts, this training is an essential resource to stay informed and prepared. Don't miss this opportunity to enhance your skills and make a difference in your community.

**Register Here** by scanning the QR code

Contact Brandy Joyner for more information.  
 bjoyner@tccada.state.sc.us  
 803-536-4900-202

**NARCAN training stations will be available during break times.**

The Tri-County Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse is bringing this FREE training to our community educators, prevention providers, coalition members, law enforcement, probation officers, school administration, treatment providers, nurses, health care workers, and counselors.





(students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

# Wellness Corner

As the semester begins, it's easy to fall into the trap of constant productivity, but your brain needs regular breaks to function at its best. Intentionally setting aside “no-study” time each day—even just 30 to 60 minutes—gives your mind space to reset and refocus. Use this time for something that genuinely brings you joy and feels restorative: take a walk, read a book for fun, call a friend, draw, or just relax without guilt. This practice not only helps reduce burnout but also boosts creativity and motivation when you return to your academic tasks. Think of it as recharging your internal battery—because rest is productive, too.



Woman relaxing on a red bench looking at a pond

# Writing Tip: Citing Laws and Legislation

Citing laws and legislation in APA style can seem tricky, but it follows a clear structure. Begin with the name of the law, followed by the title number, source, and section number in parentheses, then the year. For example: *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq. (1990)*. In your reference list, you don't need to italicize any parts of the citation. Be sure to include the URL if you accessed the law online, especially from a government website. For more examples, visit Purdue OWL's APA Legal References section.

# Pet of the Month



Jax the Bernese Mountain Dog

Meet Jax, a 5-year-old Bernese Mountain Dog and a classic COVID pup—loyal to a fault and never more than two steps away. He's a gentle giant with a dramatic pant, a love for ear scratches, and a deep need to be the center of attention. Though anxious by nature, he surprises us with random bursts of energy, full of big barks, butt wiggles, and his favorite pastime: tossing individual leaves into the air like tiny treasures. He's not great at being alone, but he's excellent at being loved. - C&R Student, Josh Vigder

Show us your pet by filling out the form below:

## Pet of the Month



# Save the Date

8/1 - Ollie Johnson Memorial Interstate 95 Annual Health Fair

8/11 - High in Plain Sight: Current Drug Trends Training

8/13 - Class Payment Deadline

8/15 - New and Returning Student Orientation Event

8/19 - First Day of Classes

8/26 - Lunch and Learn - Inside Counseling Services of Lancaster - Internships, Insights, and Impact

9/25 - Lunch and Learn - Trauma-Informed Care in Addiction Counseling

10/21 - Lunch and Learn - Strength in Systems: Counseling Within a Collaborative Care Model with Prisma Health

10/24 - Professional Speaker Series

10/25 - Learning Community Saturday Event