

# INSTITUTE FOR BEST PRACTICES UNC CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH

## 2026 ACT AND IPS CONFERENCE



Image based off of a mural design by Tim Mossholder  
and used with permission from the artist

**THURSDAY AND FRIDAY  
APRIL 9-10, 2026**

Benton Convention Center  
301 W 5<sup>th</sup> St. Winston-Salem, NC 27101



**SCAN HERE FOR  
MORE INFORMATION**

**THIS CONFERENCE IS MADE POSSIBLE BY SUPPORT FROM:**

UNC Institute for Best Practices  
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
UNC Department of Psychiatry  
The North Carolina ACT Coalition

As we welcome you to the Institute's 2026 ACT and IPS Conference, we pause to reflect on the roots of this gathering and the community that continues to shape it.

This conference was born out of the commitment and support of the North Carolina ACT Coalition. Formed in 2006 by a small group of behavioral health agency leaders, the Coalition emerged from a shared belief that ACT in North Carolina should be implemented with integrity, collaboration, and fidelity to the model. By 2011, 88 teams across 56 agencies identified as ACT, yet only 25 teams from 17 agencies were part of the Coalition. Today, the NC ACT Coalition represents 31 agencies administering 84 teams, carrying forward its long-standing mission to strengthen high-fidelity ACT across the state.

From the beginning, Coalition members have come together to share information, mentor one another, elevate policy and funding issues, and bring in topic-specific speakers to deepen collective knowledge. As this collaboration grew, so did the desire for a dedicated gathering—first as a single conference day, and eventually as the broader annual event we know today.

IPS SE teams stand in lockstep with ACT in their mission to help people rebuild their lives, where getting and keeping a job can be a critical part of the recovery journey. The alignment between ACT and IPS has strengthened our statewide commitment to person-centered, evidence-based support, making this joint conference a natural extension of the work. The pandemic brought ACT and IPS providers together in a shared virtual space, and in 2023 we reunited in person for our first joint live ACT/IPS Conference.

We extend our sincere appreciation to NC DHHS' Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Use Services, whose annual sponsorship helps sustain this conference and the collaborative spirit it represents. We are also grateful for UNC Department of Psychiatry's Dive In Grant, which supports essential conference equipment.

We deeply appreciate this year's speakers—providers, leaders, researchers, and lived experience experts—many of whom embody more than one of these roles. Their contributions bring both inspiration and practical skills to carry back to your teams.

I also want to recognize my team at the Institute for Best Practices and the UNC Center for Excellence in Community Mental Health. Each person steps in with dedication and skill to carry out the work guided by our Conference Committee—Kristin Lukaszewicz, Ariel Reyonolds, and Chris Fournier. This crew has taken the conference far beyond the humble beginnings that Stacy Smith ("Sr.") and I once shepherded. A special nod goes to Steve Betuker for his steadfast advocacy on behalf of the NC ACT Coalition.

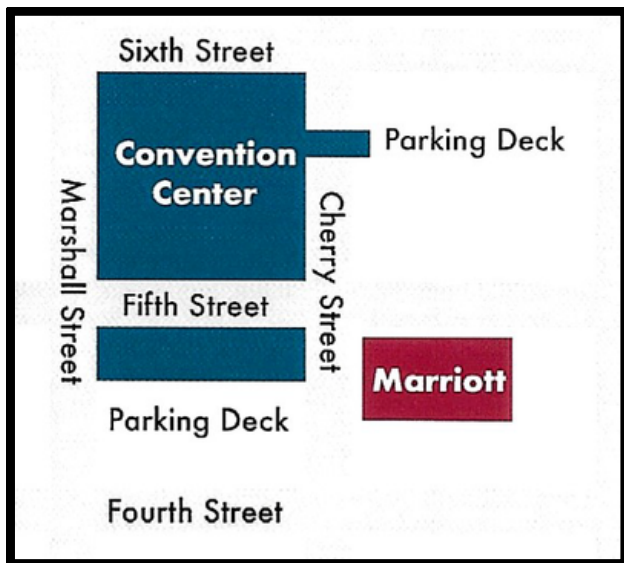
Our mission remains to preserve the quality of this conference while expanding our reach. We are grateful for the growing interest and participation from colleagues in North Carolina and beyond.

Enjoy the conference.

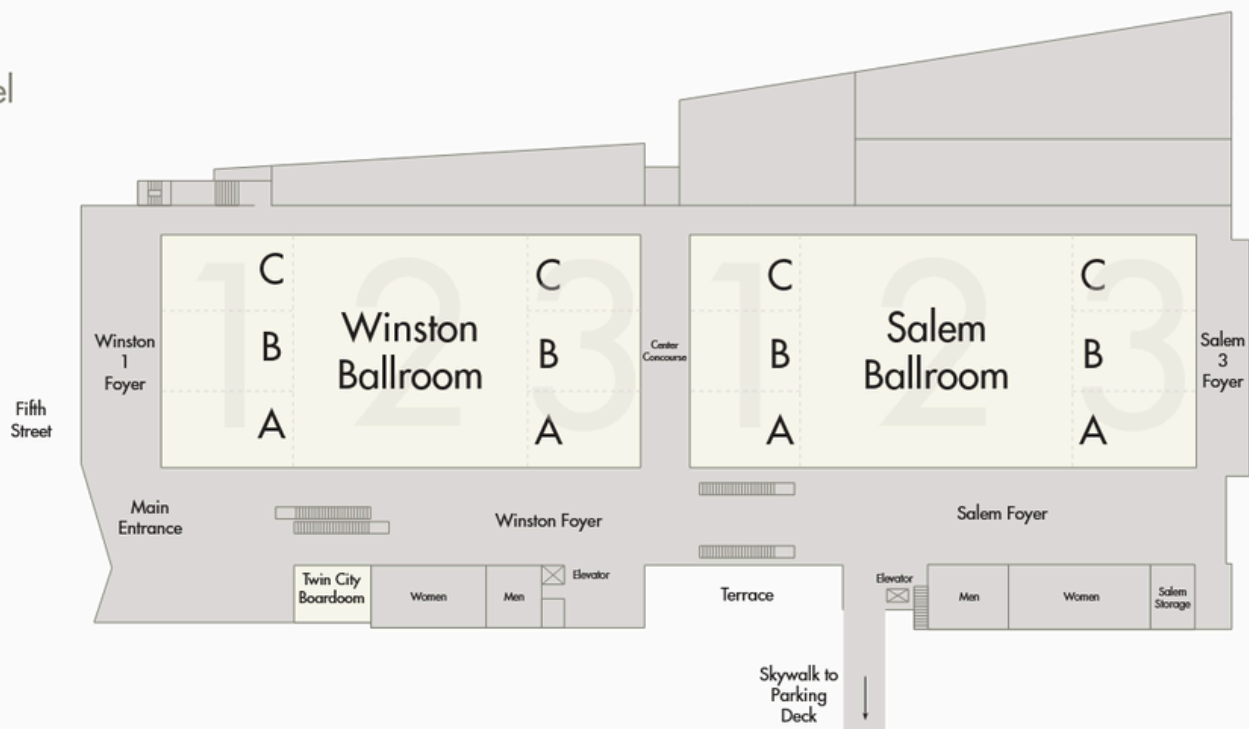


Lorna  
Director of the Institute for Best Practices  
Center for Excellence in Community Mental Health  
Department of Psychiatry





Main Level





**6<sup>th</sup> St. and Cherry St. Parking Deck**

519 N. Cherry St. Winston-Salem, NC 27101

Monday – Friday 6:30 am – 5:30 pm

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Every hour        | \$1.00 |
| Max and Overnight | \$9.00 |

Evenings and Weekends

|                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| (after 5:30 pm) Monday – Friday | \$2.00 Flat |
| Saturday and Sunday all Day     | \$2.00 Flat |

Skywalk from 3rd level parking deck to the main level of Benton

The closest parking deck to WINSTON BALLROOM,  
SALEM BALLROOM and PIEDMONT EXHIBIT HALL

**Marriott Valet Only Parking**

|                                 |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Up to 4 hours                   | \$23.00 |
| 4-8 Hours                       | \$26.00 |
| Over 8hrs and Overnight Parking | \$30.00 |

**Cherry St. and Marshall St. Parking Deck**  
**(next to Embassy Suites)**

402 N Cherry St. Winston-Salem, NC 27101

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| 1 Hour   | \$4.00  |
| 2 Hours  | \$7.00  |
| 4 Hours  | \$9.00  |
| Up to 12 Hours   | \$12.00 |
| Up to 24 Hours   | \$25.00 |
| Lost Ticket  | \$60.00 |
| In and Out Pass<br>(Pre-Paid Parking with in & out privileges) | \$25.00 |

Skywalk from 2nd level parking deck to the 2nd floor of Marriott.  
Elevator in the Skywalk to Benton Convention Center.

The closest parking deck to  
GALLERY BALLROOM and the GAINES BALLROOM in Benton  
in addition to HEARN BALLROOM in Marriott.



**DISCLAIMER:** Please note that other parking decks and lots in the area may be private and not open to the public. Unauthorized vehicles will be towed at the vehicle owner's expense.

Please note, prices are subject to change without notice.

Updated as of 1.9.26

|       | <b>Winston Foyer</b>     | <b>Winston 2</b>       | <b>Winston 1A</b>   | <b>Winston 1B</b>                                   | <b>Winston 1C</b>  |
|-------|--------------------------|------------------------|---|---|--|
| 8:30  | Attendee Check-In        |                        |   |   |  |
| 9:00  |                          |                        |   |   |  |
| 9:30  |                          | Conference Opening     |   |   |  |
| 10:00 |                          | Keynote (Justin Volpe) |   |   |  |
| 10:30 |                          |                        | Using Peers as Partners in the Justice System                           | Community as a Spiritual Practice                   | From Care to Careers: Leading an Employment-Focused Culture that Delivers Hope, Purpose, and Paychecks |
| 11:00 |                          |                        |   |   |  |
| 11:30 |                          |                        |   |   |  |
| 12:00 |                          | Plenary (Steve Smith)  |   |   |  |
| 12:30 | Lunch                    |                        | NC ACT Coalition Meeting (bring your lunch)                             |   |  |
| 1:00  |                          |                        |   |   |  |
| 1:30  |                          |                        |   |   |  |
| 2:00  |                          |                        | DBT in Community Settings: Practical Strategies for High-Acuity Clients | ACT. Making the Most Out of ACT Daily Team Meetings | Practical Strategies for Leaning into Risk   |
| 2:30  |                          |                        |   |   |  |
| 3:00  |                          |                        |   |   |  |
| 3:30  |                          |                        | Peer Support Panel Discussion   | Leadership Panel Discussion                         | Job Development Panel Discussion   |
| 4:00  |                          |                        |   |   |  |
| 4:30  | Social/ Networking Event |                        |   |   |  |
| 5:00  |                          |                        |   |   |  |
| 5:30  |                          |                        |   |   |  |
| 6:00  |                          |                        |   |   |  |

*Conference attendees should choose between sessions in Winston 1A, 1B, and 1C when applicable. If a session in any of these three rooms appears at capacity, please chose another session to attend. It is recommended, but not required, that IPS or employment focused providers attend sessions in Winston 1C when applicable.*

*NBCC contact hours can be earned for each speaker session attended based upon completion of the session evaluation (QR codes for session evaluations will be available on all tables). Please check with each specific licensing board to determine if they accept NBCC contact hours for continuing education credit.*

8:30 - 9:30

**Conference Attendee Check-in/Morning Snack** (Winston Foyer)

9:30 - 9:45

**Conference Opening** (Winston 2)

9:45 - 10:15

**Keynote** (Winston 2)**A Recovery Experience***Justin Volpe*

Hear from the perspective of someone that has been involved with many systems throughout the Behavioral Health Spectrum and how Justin turned his life around through Peer Support and helping others. This perspective will bring hope, and empower people to strive for more as well as talk about career growth through peer support.

10:30 - 11:45

**Breakout Session****Using Peers as Partners in Justice Settings***Justin Volpe*

Occasions arise where the individuals served are involved with the criminal justice system. Engage in a brief overview of how forensic peer support is practiced, including some real world examples of this specific flavor of peer support in action, and see how yet another challenging aspect of someone's past can be turned into an asset for the community.

**Community as a Spiritual Practice***Karon Johnson*

A sense of belonging and purpose is essential to our identity, and can be a strong resource for recovery and overall well-being. When we are in community, be it a community of faith or otherwise, we develop a connection to our inner wisdom, to others, and to the larger community around us. Explore how developing community in itself is a spiritual practice and how all of us in this work can bring spirituality into our practice even when religion is not our primary focus.

**From Care to Careers: Leading an Employment-Focused Culture that Delivers Hope, Purpose, and Paychecks***Hillary Faulk Vaughan*

Building a team with an employment-focused culture that supports recovery takes time and requires re-framing employment as a core treatment outcome, not an add-on and highlighting the roles of leadership, teams, and clients in making employment possible. Explore practical strategies to shift beliefs, align systems, and integrate employment into everyday practice.



12:00 - 12:30

Plenary (Winston 2)



### Leaning into Risk

*Steve Smith*

Why do we err on the side of caution? Our hesitations often come from a place of care and compassion. However, ACT, was developed into order to lean into risk, rather than retreat from it. Let's explore the concept of dignity of risk and how teams can embrace reasonable risk-taking in order to help folks achieve meaningful goals

12:30 - 2:00

Lunch (Winston Foyer)

NC ACT Coalition Meeting - grab your lunch and head to Winston 1A

2:00 - 3:15

Breakout session

### DBT in Community Settings: Practical Strategies for High-Acuity Clients

*Marissa Holsten*

Explore strategies for using mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness with clients experiencing crises, chronic stress, or complex behavioral challenges. Learn how to integrate Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) into everyday interactions to enhance client coping, engagement, and resilience with practical tools to teach and coach DBT skills in real-world, high-acuity settings.



### ACT. Making the Most Out of ACT Daily Team Meetings

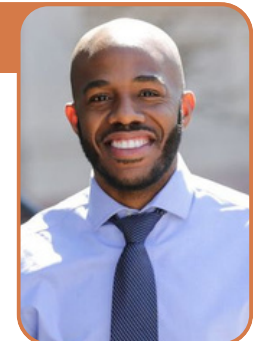
*Lorna Moser*

Through demonstrations and practice, learn the core functions of the daily team meeting. These functions include conducting the client roll call, maintaining the client log, adjusting staff schedules, and monitoring for high risk concerns and accountability. Discuss ways to intentionally include moments of education, supervision, and celebration.

### Practical Strategies for Leaning into Risk

*Steve Smith*

Examine how multidisciplinary teams can unintentionally adopt risk-averse practices that limit clients' recovery and growth, even when motivated by care and concern. Explore how team dynamics, liability concerns, and a focus on keeping things stable rather than promoting change can shift treatment away from growth-oriented approaches. By understanding dignity of risk, teams can learn to recognize when their protective instincts may cross into restriction.



3:30 – 4:30

Panel Discussion

**Peer Support: Avoiding Role Drift***facilitated by Jacob Schonberg*

Peer support specialists will answer questions submitted by conference attendees prior to the session and share their experiences in this area of practice on community mental health teams.

**Leadership: Being More than Just a Supervisor***facilitated by Erin Galloway*

Individuals in leadership positions will answer questions submitted by conference attendees prior to the session and share their experiences in this area of practice with community mental health teams.

**Employment Services: Job Development and Job Search Tips***facilitated by Penny Liles*

Employment specialists will answer pre-selected questions submitted by conference attendees prior to the session and share their experiences in this area of practice on community mental health teams.



4:30 – 6:00

**Social/Networking Event** (Winston Foyer)

free hors d'oeuvres  
drinks available for purchase at the venue's bar

|       | Winston Foyer     | Winston 2              | Winston 1A   | Winston 1B   | Winston 1C   |  |  |
|-------|-------------------|------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 8:30  | Attendee Check-In |                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9:00  |                   | Plenary (Carrie Brown) |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9:30  |                   |                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10:00 |                   |                        | Treatment Pearls for Co-Occurring Disorders                          | Beyond Compliance: Turning "Stuck" Moments into Corrective Experiences | Up and At 'Em: Behavioral Activation from an OT Perspective                                    |  |  |
| 10:30 |                   |                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11:00 |                   |                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11:30 |                   |                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12:00 | Lunch             |                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12:30 |                   |                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1:00  |                   |                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1:30  |                   |                        | Thinking Differently about Suicide and Psychosis: A Peer Perspective | More than a Lease, Helping People Feel at Home                         | It's Time for a Safety Check Up! Exploring and Planning for Safety Challenges in the Community |  |  |
| 2:00  |                   |                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2:30  |                   |                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3:00  |                   | Plenary (Stacy Smith)  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3:30  |                   | Conference closing     |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4:00  |                   |                        |  |  |  |  |  |

Conference attendees should choose between sessions in Winston 1A, 1B, and 1C when applicable. If a session in any of these three rooms appears at capacity, please choose another session to attend. It is recommended, but not required, that IPS or employment focused providers attend sessions in Winston 1C when applicable.

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8:30 – 9:00

**Conference Attendee Check-in\*/Morning Snack** (Winston Foyer)

\*only for those that did not attend day 1

9:00 – 9:30

**Plenary Session** (Winston 2)**State Perspectives from a Former ACT Psychiatrist***Carrie Brown*

A “state of the state” for Behavioral Health in North Carolina with perspectives as a former ACT psychiatrist. Come see how a background in ACT and launching the UNC Wake ACT Team helped inform system work for NC’s most vulnerable populations.

9:45 – 12:00

**Workshop Session****Treatment Pearls for Co-Occurring Disorders***Jenny Kemper and Anna Peyton*

Learn about common illicit substances used, typical intoxication symptoms, and withdrawal symptoms, as they pertain to individuals who use substances and have co-occurring psychotic disorders. Participants will learn the basics of harm reduction, motivational interviewing, and tips to achieving diagnostic clarity. The workshop will end with several cases for group discussion.

**Beyond Compliance: Turning “Stuck” Moments into Corrective Experiences***Candice Cartner*

Clients often look “stuck” (missing appointments, avoiding job tasks, declining medications, stalling on goals or pushing staff away). Explore ways to re-frame those moments as prime opportunities for corrective emotional experiences that change beliefs, grow trust, and ultimately shift behavior. Drawing on CBT and empowerment-based practice, learn simple, community-ready structures that can be use in cars, homes, and job sites.

**Up and At 'Em: Behavioral Activation from an OT Perspective***Antoine Bailliard*

It’s not uncommon for clients to say “I don’t know” when asked about what their interests are. This workshop will focus on strategies to use when helping people who are struggling to express their own desires and interests in meaningful activities. In other words, helping people get “up and at 'em” outside of the house and out in the community.



12:30 - 2:00

Lunch (Winston Foyer)

1:30 - 2:45

Breakout Session

**Thinking Differently About Suicide and Psychosis: A Peer Perspective***Bodi Bodenhamer*

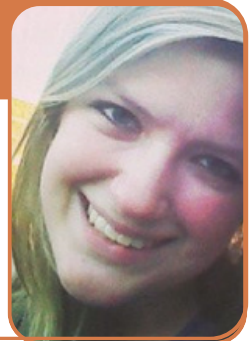
Suicide prevention is a topic on every mental health service provider's mind. Hear one lived experience point of view, couched in the values of Peer Support and presented as a strategy for understanding both suicide and psychosis, their differences and interplay, and why it's important for us to begin to think differently about those who have this unique relationship with life and death.

**More Than a Lease: Helping People Feel at Home***Jordan Gully*

Housing and tenancy support services have a role in promoting stability, recovery, and community integration. Learn to combat common housing challenges by using practical strategies to assess housing needs, preferences, and supports, while helping people understand tenant responsibilities and build positive landlord relationships.

**It's Time for a Safety Check Up! Exploring and Planning for Safety Challenges in the Community***Natalie Sprague*

When was the last time you did a physical and psychological safety check up for yourself, your team, and your clients while in the field? Come explore the "safety spectrum" and how to plan, navigate scene safety, and follow up with any safety challenges. Other components of safety, including practical de-escalation techniques and ethical dilemmas, will be discussed.



3:00 - 3:30

Plenary Session (Winston 2)

**40 Years, 40(ish) Lessons***Stacy Smith*

Cap off the conference with a (mostly) lighthearted accounting of lessons learned from a very long and varied career in NC human services. Having held so, so many jobs in mental health, Stacy's learned quite a few things that she tries to put into daily practice. She is happy to share these hard-won lessons in an effort to infuse humility, hilarity, and hope into the work you do.

3:30 - 3:45

Conference Closing (Winston 2)

During the conference, the following entities will have tables set up in the Winston Foyer, feel free to visit them before the conference starts and ends each day or on breaks between sessions!



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

Division of Mental Health,  
Developmental Disabilities and  
Substance Use Services



**PARTNERS**  
Improving Lives.  
Strengthening Communities.®



**VAYAHEALTH**

**Antoine Bailliard, PhD, MS, OTR/L, FAOTA** (Fellow of the American Occupational Therapy Association an honor given to occupational therapists who have made significant contributions to the field) is a Professor in the Occupational Therapy Doctorate Division at Duke University and Adjunct Professor at the Center for Excellence in Community Mental Health at UNC-Chapel Hill. He is a consultant and trainer for the Institute for Best Practices and is co-principal investigator of a SAMHSA grant to develop HomeLink, an innovative peer-led team that provides assertive outreach to adults with serious mental illness who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Dr. Bailliard's clinical experience spans from working in acute inpatient mental health, chronic inpatient mental health, and community-based mental health settings.

**Bodi Bodenhamer, NC CPSS** is Lead Peer Support Specialist at the UNC OASIS clinic in Chapel Hill, NC. They have worked in peer support since 2016, primarily with adolescents and young adults experiencing medical treatment for psychosis, with whom they share similar lived experience. They also have lifelong experience with creating 2D art and storytelling, which are the cornerstones of their own recovery. Bodi believes in the critical nature of community connectivity in the context of recovery, and strives to grow those connections in order to show their strength and resilience and success where other, traditional modalities and avenues of treatment fail.

**Carrie Brown, MD, MPH, DFAPA** provides psychiatric leadership across NCDHHS and serves as the Chief Medical Officer for North Carolina's 13 state-operated healthcare facilities. As a graduate of Princeton University, she completed her medical training at Duke University and MPH at UNC Gillings School of Public Health. She has extensive clinical experience across community, inpatient, integrated care, and correctional settings. She also serves as an Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the UNC School of Medicine and an Assistant Consulting Professor in the Duke University School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences.

**Candice Cartner, MA, LCMHC, NCC** is a Clinical Mental Health Counselor with concentrations in Addiction Counseling, Marriage and Family Therapy, as well as Expressive Arts Therapy. Candice also earned a BS in Sociology/Psychology with concentrations in Family Development, Race and Minority Relations. For nearly 14 years Candice has helped thousands of clients achieve their personal and professional goals through her uniquely developed framework for mindset mastery while aligning their values and vision to reach beyond the potential they knew they had. Before opening her private therapy practice and executive coaching firm, Candice worked primarily in the Community Mental Health sector with roles including Clinical Director, Evidence Based Practice Specialist, and ACTT Lead. She currently lives in NC with her husband and two small but mighty children.

**Hillary Faulk Vaughan, MA, LPA, HSP-PA** is a psychologist who received a Masters Degree in Psychology from the University of North Carolina Wilmington and her graduate work focused on implementation of social skills programs in the prison system for the SPMI population and her professional work has continued with that population ever since. Hillary serves as the Clinical Director of Physician Alliance for Mental Health and is co-owner of Embrace Wellness Group in Wilmington, NC. Hillary serves as the chair person of Trillium Health Resources Clinical Advisory Committee, has served on the development teams of Brunswick and New Hanover County Mental Health Courts, is a TMACT co-reviewer in NC, has served various advisory roles for local and state government for ACT, CST and IPS. Hillary's continued goals are to increase awareness and understanding of the SPMI population and to fight for those who struggle to fight for themselves.

**Jordan Gulley, LICSW** is a Senior Consultant at the Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc. (TAC) with over 20 years of experience managing programs and overseeing systems serving people experiencing homelessness and those with behavioral health (BH) conditions. Her work focuses on system assessment, cross-system collaboration, workforce development, and strengthening service quality and fidelity within housing and community-based BH systems. She leads training and technical assistance efforts nationwide to enhance supportive housing and other evidence-based BH services, and supports cross-system initiatives at the intersection of behavioral health, homelessness, and criminal justice.

**Marissa Holsten, LCSW** is the founder of Evolve Therapy and Consulting with almost 2 decades of experience providing trauma-informed care to adults experiencing PTSD, grief, anxiety, depression, relational stress, and complex life transitions. Marissa's work emphasizes deep clinical attunement, developmental and trauma-informed conceptualization, and pragmatic strategies for real-world coping and growth. Marissa provides individual therapy, professional trainings, and clinical supervision to clinicians at all stages of practice. She is passionate about supporting providers to deepen clinical skill, refine case conceptualization, and cultivate therapeutic presence while preventing burnout. Her trainings blend research-informed frameworks with translational clinical application to support sustainable, effective practice.

**Karon Johnson, MACM, MSW, LCSW, CCTP** is a graduate of the UNC School of Social Work and currently serves as a clinical assistant professor and member of the practicum faculty. She teaches direct practice courses and supports students in placements related to adult mental health and substance use. She is a Doctor of Ministry student at Vanderbilt University Divinity School where she focuses on increasing mental health literacy and support among clergy and faith leaders. Her research interests include ethics, the intersection of spirituality and social work, and trauma, including grief and loss. Karon is a bilingual clinician who also maintains a private clinical practice in Durham, N.C., focusing on trauma, grief and loss, supporting individuals for whom religion or spirituality are systems of importance.

**Jenny Kemper, MD** is an assistance clinical professor at UNC's Psychiatry Department. She is currently medical director of UNC Encompass, a first episode psychosis clinic, and works as an attending within the UNC Substance Treatment and Recovery (STAR) clinic. She completed her Psychiatry residency at the University of California San Francisco in 2015 and went on to complete the UNC Forensic Psychiatry fellowship in 2016. She is currently board certified in general psychiatry, forensic psychiatry and addiction medicine.

**Lorna Moser, PhD** is a Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. She is the Director of the Institute for Best Practices and provides training, consultation, and evaluation services in support of assertive community treatment (ACT) across the United States and abroad. Lorna is the co-author of the Tool for Measurement of ACT (TMACT), a contemporary measure of ACT fidelity, as well as co-developer of eTMACT, a software as a service (SaaS). Lorna conducts research examining the facilitators and barriers to higher fidelity ACT implementation, and was the Principal Investigator on the National ACT Study, funded by Arnold Ventures. Lorna has worked in various behavioral health settings, including on two ACT teams, and is a licensed clinical psychologist.

**Anna Peyton, DO** is board-certified in Family Medicine and Addiction Medicine. She is currently practicing at Virginia Commonwealth University in the Division of Addiction Medicine. At VCU, Dr. Peyton provides clinical care, teaches medical trainees, and works to expand access to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders. With a commitment to harm reduction, health equity, and destigmatizing addiction, she integrates a whole-person, compassionate approach to care across hospital and community settings.

**Stacy Smith M.Ed., LCMHC** is a Senior Trainer and Consultant with the Institute for Best Practices. With almost 40 years of experience in North Carolina mental health services, Stacy serves as a consultant, trainer and TMACT evaluator in North Carolina and beyond. She is a member of the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT), and regularly uses Motivational Interviewing in her personal and professional lives.

**Stephen (Steve) M. Smith, PhD** is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist whose professional mission is dedicated to equipping mental health providers and organizations with the necessary tools to advance health equity for individuals experiencing serious mental health concerns, and particularly those individuals from marginalized communities. Whether providing direct care or supporting other treatment providers, Dr. Smith constantly seeks to expand our understanding of the impact of cultural and structural factors on how we conceptualize and respond to individuals experiencing mental health concerns. Dr. Smith also has a private practice in which he provides psychotherapy specifically for people of color.

**Natalie Sprague, LCSW, LCAS** works for the City of Durham's Community Safety Department through HEART as the Program Manager for the "Familiar Neighbor" team (serving neighbors with SPMI and frequent justice/emergency services utilization). Her previous community based mental health experience includes working for a crisis call line, an emergency shelter, and in an inpatient facility-based crisis unit. She remains dedicated to serving the whole community, including the most marginalized, by utilizing person-centered approaches and bringing agencies together to improve care collaboration.

**Justin Volpe, CRPS** is an international consultant, advocate, and peer specialist based out of Miami, FL. He has presented and trained mental health facilities and other organizations on trauma informed care practices and used his life experiences as lessons to what appropriate care should look like from a community level. Before his role with NASMHPD, Justin worked as a Jail Diversion Peer Liaison for the 11th Judicial Criminal Mental Health Project in Miami-Dade County Florida for 14 years. He has worked as a Certified Recovery Peer Specialist in Florida since 2008 and has extensive work experience in the community. Justin has supervised and coordinated thousands of engagements with participants with serious mental health and co-occurring issues in the criminal justice system. He has assisted in training over 3,000 Miami Dade Law Enforcement Officers in Crisis Intervention Team Training. His passion for this work is based on bringing systems together locally and nationally while reducing stigma and advocating for the persons served.