

The Department of Counselor Education and Student Affairs



Spring, 2026 Newsletter



NEW FACULTY ROLES AND NEW BABIES ON BOARD



DR. LAUREN MOSS– Dr. Moss will be stepping into the role of Department Chair beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year. Dr. Moss brings years of experience as a school counselor, special education teacher, and qualitative researcher to her new role. Embodying the principle of work-life balance, she spent the first half of the Spring '26 semester on maternal family leave to spend time with her 9 month old. After her brief time away, she is excited to be back on campus and to lead the counseling department with her signature style of humility, professionalism, and integrity.

DR. CHRISTOPHER COOPER– Dr. Cooper Ed.D., LPC, NCC, CCTP-II, CAADC (He/His) not only added a "Dr." to his long list of titles, but also 'father' with the birth of his first child in January. In addition to his new titles, he has assumed the role of faculty advisor for CSI, and Internship Coordinator for the Counseling Department. As a former CSI member himself, he is excited to bring fresh ideas and leadership. Congratulations Dr. Cooper!



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Editor: Lauren Suter; Contributors: Angela Leamon, Cara MacMahon
Advisor: Joanne Cohen

NEW DEPARTMENT SECRETARY

WELCOME KIMBERLY MILLER

"I am excited to be working in the Counselor Education & Student Affairs Department. I have 3 children, daughter Katie is an '07 graduate of KU, oldest son Brennan a '10 graduate and youngest child Andrew a '12 PSU graduate. I have a 6-month old grandson Liam who I absolutely adore! I have a small gift basket business and enjoy doing crafts."



SPRING 2026 GRADUATE FAIR



The Counselor Education Department was represented at the Spring 2026 graduate fair hosted by the career development center. Graduate Assistants, Lauren Suter and Angela Leamon, along with Professor Sara Jones spoke with prospective students about counselor education programs. Clinical Mental Health Counseling student and graduate assistant to the graduate admissions office, Melissa Ulrich, was also in attendance to speak to students with the director of graduate admissions, Kittie Pain.

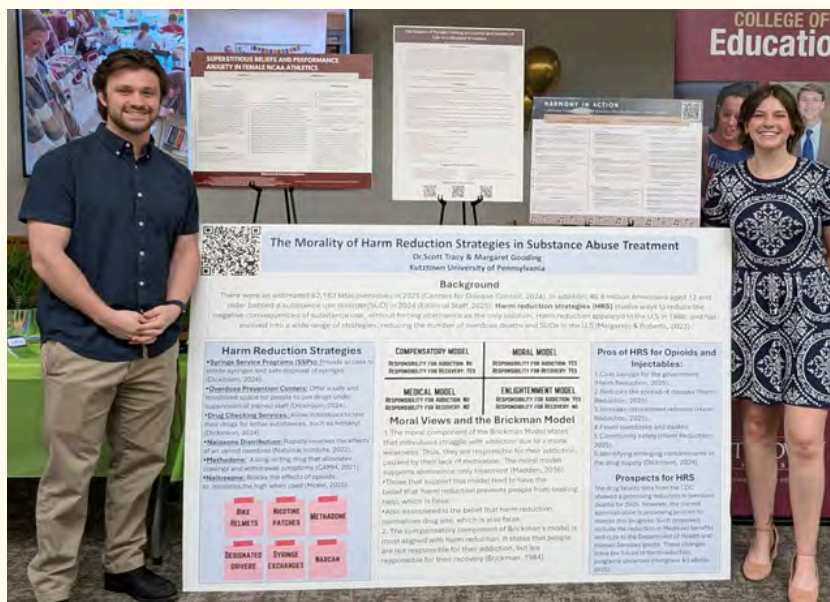


PRESIDENT'S INAUGURATION- COUNSELING DEPARTMENT WELCOMES DR. PHILIP CAVALIER

A campus-wide event was held to welcome the new Kutztown University President, Dr. Philip Cavalier, with a 2-day event held in April. Faculty and students from all areas of study were invited to represent their departments at an opening event held on Thursday, April 9th. As part of the College of Education, Dr. Brenner and fellow counseling students shared their research posters and a nature-based therapy activity to represent the Department of Counselor Education. Multiple counseling students shared their work and a few were there in person to meet and greet with attendees.



COUNSELING DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATION AT THE PRESIDENT'S INAUGURATION

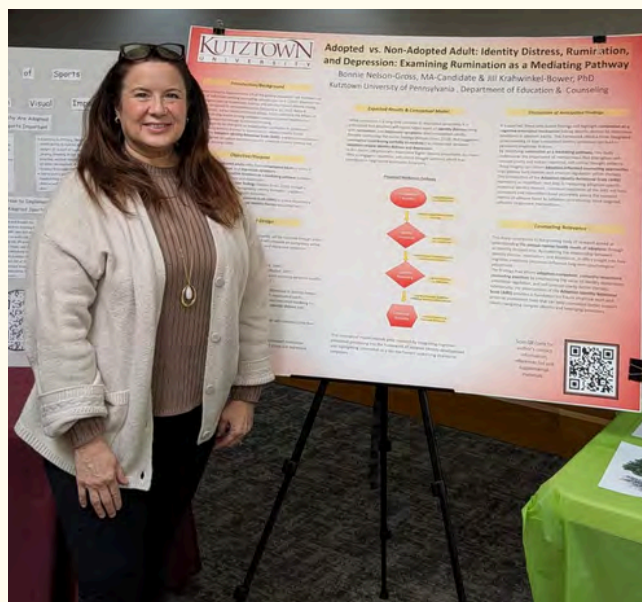


Roman Moser-

The Impact of Weight Cutting on Anxiety and Quality of Life in Collegiate Wrestling

Meg Gooding & Dr. Scott Tracy-

The Morality of Harm Reduction Strategies in Substance Abuse Treatment



Bonnie Nelson-Gross &

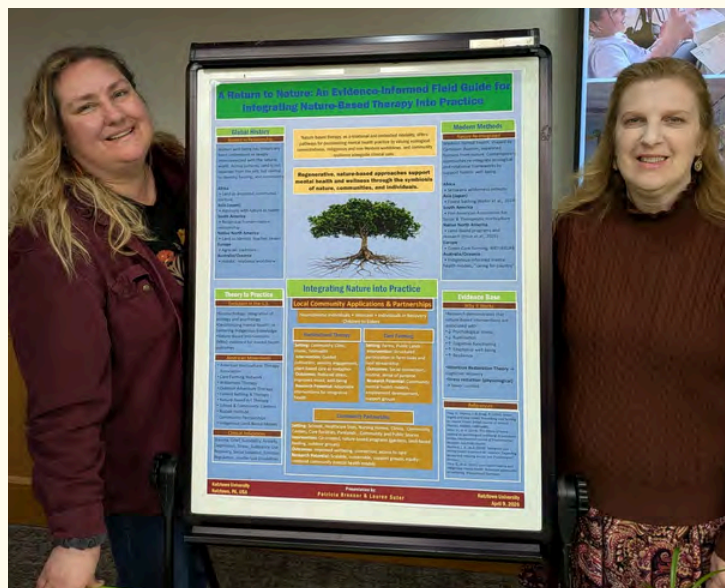
Dr. Jill Krahwinkel-Bower-

Adopted vs. Non-Adopted Adult: Identity Distress, Rumination, and Depression: Examining Rumination as a Mediating Pathway



Keeley Landis & Olivia Hoy-

Neuroscience Behind Yoga and How it Helps Anxiety in Everyday Life



Lauren Suter & Dr. Patricia Brenner-

A Return to Nature: An Evidence-Informed Field Guide for Integrating Nature-Based Therapy Into Practice

COLLABORATION BRINGS CONTINUING EDUCATION CONFERENCE TO KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY



The KU Department of Counselor Education was happy to use its designation as an Approved Continuing Education Provider by the NBCC to approve CE units for the Counselor Education Innovations Conference presented by KU Advance in February. Participants had the opportunity to earn 6 CE credits, including ethics-focused content, supporting both professional growth and licensure requirements.

“The 2026 Counselor Education Innovations (CEI) Conference brought together counseling professionals, educators, and students from across the country for a dynamic day of learning, collaboration, and forward-thinking discussion. Hosted virtually, this year’s conference continued the tradition of innovation established by its earlier roots as the Counselor Education Distance Learning Conference, originally developed through Palo Alto University. CEI remains focused on advancing counselor education through the integration of research, applied practice, and emerging technology.”



A Nationwide Community of Counselor Educators and Professionals Professionals, faculty, and graduate students joined from institutions and organizations across the United States, including representatives from Thomas Jefferson University, University of Georgia, Palo Alto University, and many others committed to strengthening counselor preparation and professional practice. The fully virtual format allowed participants to connect across regions while engaging in meaningful conversations about the evolving landscape of counselor education.

Connecting Practice, Research, and Technology

Aligned with this year’s theme—Connecting Practice, Research, and Technology in Counselor Education—sessions explored practical and innovative approaches to modern counselor training.

Text taken from the official CEI conference website.



This was a first of its kind collaboration with KU Advance with plans for more CE opportunities in the future.

A SUCCESSFUL 2026 CEI CONFERENCE - KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY

Throughout the Counselor Education Innovations (CEI) conference, presenters shared research-informed strategies and real-world applications that attendees can bring directly into their teaching, supervision, and clinical environments. As the profession continues to evolve, CEI will remain a space where educators, practitioners, and students come together to share ideas and drive progress.

KEYNOTE SPOTLIGHT:

INTERSECTION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND TECHNOLOGY

DONNA SHEPERIS, PHD, LPC, NCC, CCMHC, ACS, BC-TMH

This year's keynote speaker, Dr. Donna S. Sheperis, explored the intersection of mental health and technology and its growing role in counselor preparation and clinical practice. Her presentation highlighted both the opportunities and ethical considerations that emerging technologies present for counselor educators and practitioners, reinforcing the importance of intentional, evidence-based integration.



Topics included:

Behavioral addictions
Self-care for clinicians
The role of neuroscience
in counseling
Immersive experiences
for online counseling
AI and ethical use in
clinical practice &
counselor education

If you missed CEI this year, you can click the link below to explore this year's presentations and stay connected for updates on CEI 2027!



Dakota Sell - CEI Conference Coordinator, Graduate Assistant to the Dean of Graduate Studies & CSI President

Being part of creating and running the CEI Conference, serving as a Graduate Assistant, and leading as CSI President has shaped how I show up as a counselor-in-training. Saying "yes" to opportunities has pushed my growth and shown me that graduate school becomes what you actively choose to make of it!

DR. KRAHWINKEL-BOWER PRESENTS AT KU WOMEN'S CONSORTIUM



Dr. K was among a diverse group of professors and community members who came together for a full day of women's empowerment on March, 9th. Counseling students Lauren Suter and Lisbeth Mora met up with Dr. K at a Plant Therapy session presented by Veronica H. Moore.



“Healing the Healers: A Creative Wellness Workshop for Caregiving Professionals,” by Dr. Jill Krahwinkel-Bower

Women in caregiving professions—counselors, social workers, nurses, educators, community advocates—dedicate themselves to supporting others while often neglecting their own wellness. Secondary trauma, compassion fatigue, and burnout are occupational hazards we rarely address until crisis hits. This interactive round table guides participants through creating a personalized, comprehensive wellbeing plan using the eight domains of wellness: emotional, physical, social, intellectual, occupational, environmental, financial, and spiritual.

Through creative activities, guided reflection, and collaborative dialogue, participants will assess their current wellbeing, identify vulnerabilities specific to caregiving work, and develop concrete, actionable strategies for each wellness domain. Creative elements including vision boarding, embodied movement, reflective writing, and community mapping will engage different learning styles while making wellness planning accessible and sustainable. Participants leave with a tangible wellbeing plan, accountability partnerships, and creative tools for ongoing self-restoration. This session embodies resilience through proactive self-care, restoration through holistic healing practices, and unity through shared commitment to collective wellness.



KU FACULTY WORK IN THE FIELD



Dr. Jill Krahwinkel-Bower, Ph.D., LPC,
CAADC, CCTP, CT/RTC,
JSOCC
Specialties:
Anxiety & Depression
LGBTQ+ & Minority Stress
Addiction & Trauma



Jean Albert, MA, LPC
Specialties:
Children & Adolescents
School & Behavioral
Issues
College Students &
Career Counseling
Families & Couples



Dr. Christopher Cooper, Ed.D., LPC, NCC, CCTP-II,
CAADC - Member of PA Army National Guard.
Focus: Drug & Alcohol, systems theory, solution
focused theory, and behavioral based counseling.



Dr. Sarah Jones, Ph.D.,
LPC Approaches:
constructivist
perspective, person-
centered techniques,
LGBTQIA+ affirming
counselor



**Dr. Ramona
Palmerio-Roberts**,
Licensed
Psychologist, CCS,
CCTP-II, CET1
Senior Executive
Director, Regional
Outpatient Services

DR. PATRICIA BRENNER RECOGNIZED FOR HER LEADERSHIP



Grant Recipient Award

Dr. Brenner was the recipient of an award for a \$5,000 grant she secured to support her advocacy effort to bring Mental Health First Aid to Kutztown over the Summer '25 break. The grant extended training into 2026 when Brenner coordinated an in-person Mental Health First-Aid Training for Older Adults, and an online general training to be held on June 1st, 2026. Attendees from as far as over an hour away registered for the older adult training which is the only one of its kind being offered in the area.

Phenomenal Women Award

In honor of Women's History month, the KU Women's Center hosted their 3rd annual Phenomenal Women Awards Reception on Thursday, March 26th in the MSU. Dr. Brenner was honored along with other women from around campus for their work, kindness, mentorship, and being their phenomenal selves!



INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP ASSOCIATION DIALOGUE LAB

Dr. Patricia Brenner attended the International Leadership Association's Dialogue Lab Jan. 29-31, 2026 at Tulane University, New Orleans. Brenner was part of the planning team for this unique conference. She led plenary sessions and facilitated dialogue on the following question, "As leaders shaping digital culture, how can we leverage our platforms to critically examine and educate others on the dual impact - positive and negative - of social media across personal, familial and community spheres?"

Dialogue sessions explored current leadership challenges. Conference events also integrated music, food and cultural experiences into plenary sessions, with discussions highlighting how dialogue informs and enhances creative endeavors.



DR. KRAHWINKEL-BOWER PRESENTS AT PCB CONFERENCE



“This 3-hour training introduces clinicians to William Glasser’s Reality Therapy approach for addiction treatment, emphasizing personal responsibility, present-focused intervention, and healthier ways to meet core psychological needs. Research demonstrates Reality Therapy’s effectiveness in improving hope, metacognition, self-efficacy, and coping skills among individuals with substance use disorders. Participants will learn to help clients identify disconnects between substance use and unmet needs, engage in nonjudgmental self-evaluation, and create practical behavior change plans. The training covers foundational Reality Therapy principles, the WDEP framework (Wants, Doing, Evaluation, Planning), integration with Motivational Interviewing and the Stages of Change, and strategies for addressing resistance. Interactive discussions, case studies, and role-plays provide hands-on practice applying these tools to real-world addiction scenarios.”

DR. COOPER SUCESSFULLY DEFENDS HIS THESIS WORK AT SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY

Understanding the relationship between moral injury, burnout, secondary traumatic stress, and compassion satisfaction in counselors.

“The purpose of my study is to examine the relationship between counselor hazards such as burnout, secondary traumatic stress, the construct of moral injury and one protective factor, compassion satisfaction, in licensed professional counselors. This study will attempt to fill the gap in literature of whether moral injury can be considered a true threat to counselor efficacy. In addition, it may provide additional evidence of moral injury's vastness across professional domains.”

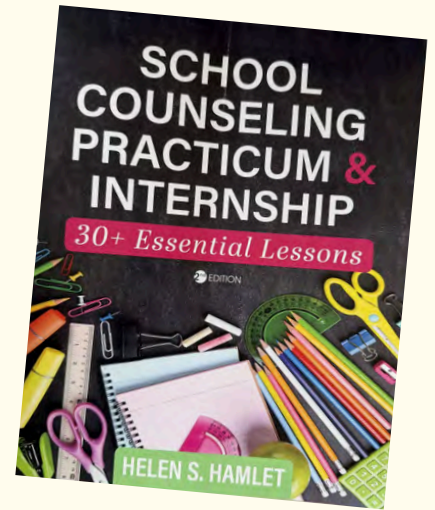
FACULTY AUTHORSHIP

Sabbaticals & Books

Dr. Hamlet and Dr. Tracy will both be on sabbatical Fall '26- Spring '27. Both plan to work on writing books.

Dr. Hamlet's textbook, *School Counseling Practicum & Internship*, is in its 3rd revision and features chapters authored by other KU faculty, including Dr. Brenner and Dr. Tracy.

Dr. Tracy will be drawing from his 20 years as a first-responder to author a book that combines his unique lens as a first-responder and a counselor.



Dr. Joanne Cohen Editorial Reviewer



Jo Cohen is an editorial reviewer for the *Journal of Person-Centered and Experiential Therapy*, as well as an editorial reviewer, consulting editor and member of the board of advisors for *The Person-Centered Journal*. She serves as the membership coordinator for the Association for the Development of the Person-Centered Approach.

Dr. Cohen wrote an endorsement for the 3rd edition of Cochran, Nordling and Cochran's book *Child-Centered Play Therapy* for use in graduate courses on play therapy.

Research by Dr. Lauren Moss

- Moss, L., S. I. Springer, C. Merlin-Knoblich, E. C. M. Mason, and B. Cholewa (2025). A Consensual Qualitative Research Study of School Counseling Site Supervisors' Group Work Supervision. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 65(1), 76–85. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.70012>
- Springer, S; Moss, L. (March 12, 2026). Consensus without Compromise: Implementing the CQR Research Process with Rigor, Fidelity, and Confidence. Invited Research Presentation. *Evidence-Based School Counseling Conference. Remote.*



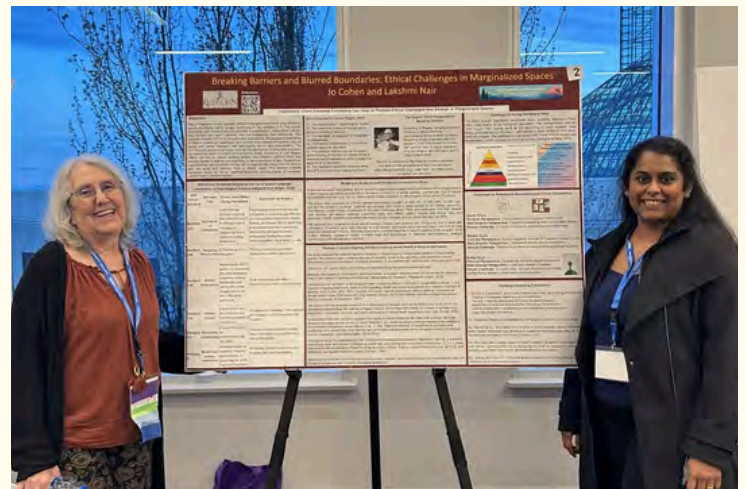
Celebrating 35 Years at Kutztown University

Dr. Cohen receives recognition for her 35 years serving as a faculty member in the Department of Counselor Education and Student Affairs. Congratulations to Dr. Cohen!

ISSTD Conference Presentation



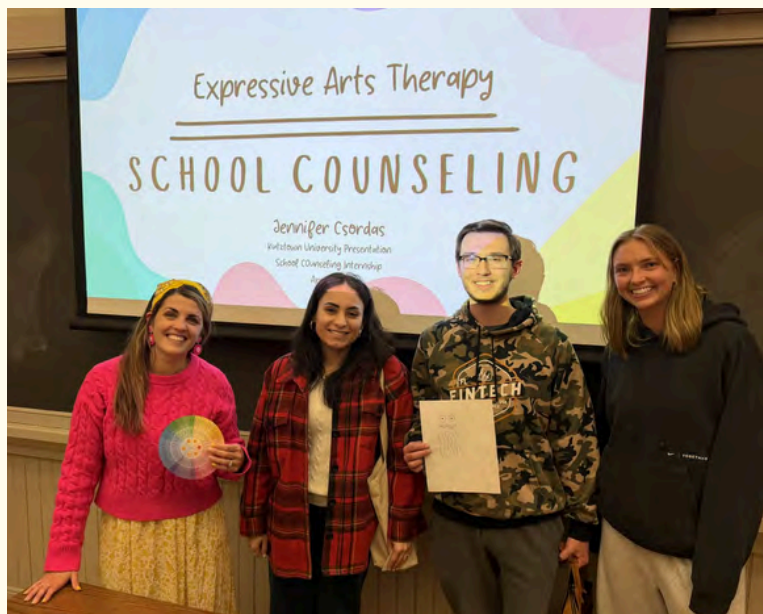
Jo Cohen and Lakshmi Nair presenting their research on managing ethical challenges in mental health practice with immigrants in a community setting. Their research identifies issues like managing confidentiality, ensuring professional responsibilities while working with interpreters and host culture norms. The presentation took place March 27th in Portland, OR at the 43rd Annual International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD) conference.



Cohen, J. & Nair, L. (2026, March 28-30). Breaking barriers and blurred boundaries: Ethical challenges in marginalized spaces.



INTERNSHIP CLASS HOSTS EXPRESSIVE ARTS THERAPIST



Csordas Collective, LLC

Dr. Moss's School Counseling internship class had a guest speaker visit to share about Expressive Arts Therapy and its application in the school setting. Jennifer Csordas, a KU Counseling Alumna, guided students in an experiential activity and spoke about scope of practice and research-based techniques to enhance social emotional growth for students. While completing her post-grad certification in Expressive Arts Therapy, Csordas is a school counselor in the East Penn school district and is now accepting clients in her private practice, Csordas Collective, based in Allentown.

CAREER COUNSELING ISSUES ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

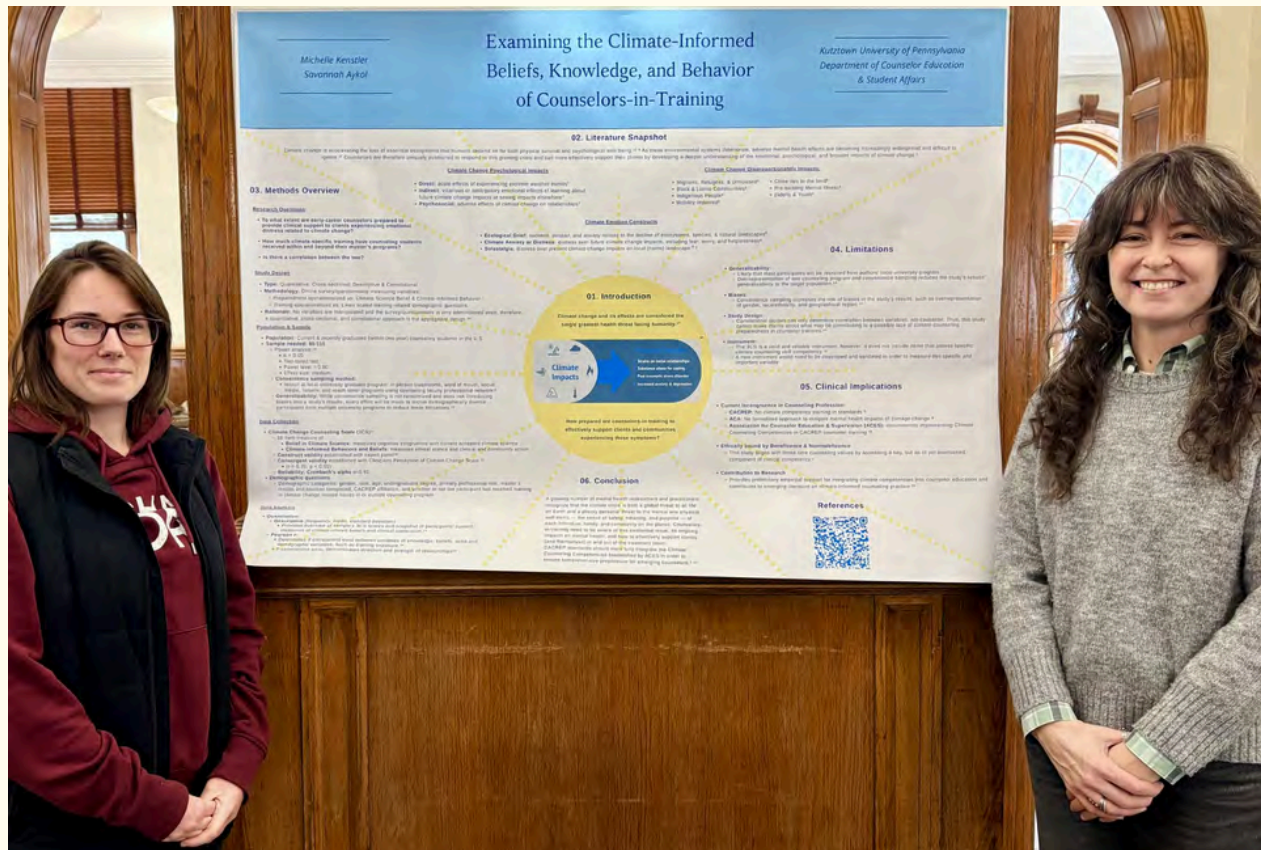


Dr. Brenner Hosts Dieruff Highschool Students

Putting practice into action, Dr. Brenner's Career Counseling class met with students from Deiruff High School to talk about their future plans and conduct assessments to explore their interests and options for their future careers.

STUDENTS IN RESEARCH METHODS CLASSES WITH DR. KRAHWINKEL-BOWER AND DR. COOPER PRESENTED RESEARCH PROPOSAL POSTER DESIGNS

As part of our Core III requirements for CACREP accredited counseling programs, Research Methods in Counseling students designed and presented research proposal posters. The posters were shared at a public event held in the lobby of the Old Main building on campus. After the event, posters were displayed on the walls of the Counselor Education 4th floor A-Wing hallway in Old Main. Prospective students were able to view student posters when coming for their interviews and were impressed by the scope of topics represented.



Savannah Aykol & Michelle Kenstler
Examining the Climate-Informed Beliefs, Knowledge,
and Behavior of Counselors-in-Training

RESEARCH METHODS RESEARCH PROPOSAL POSTERS



Melissa Ulrich

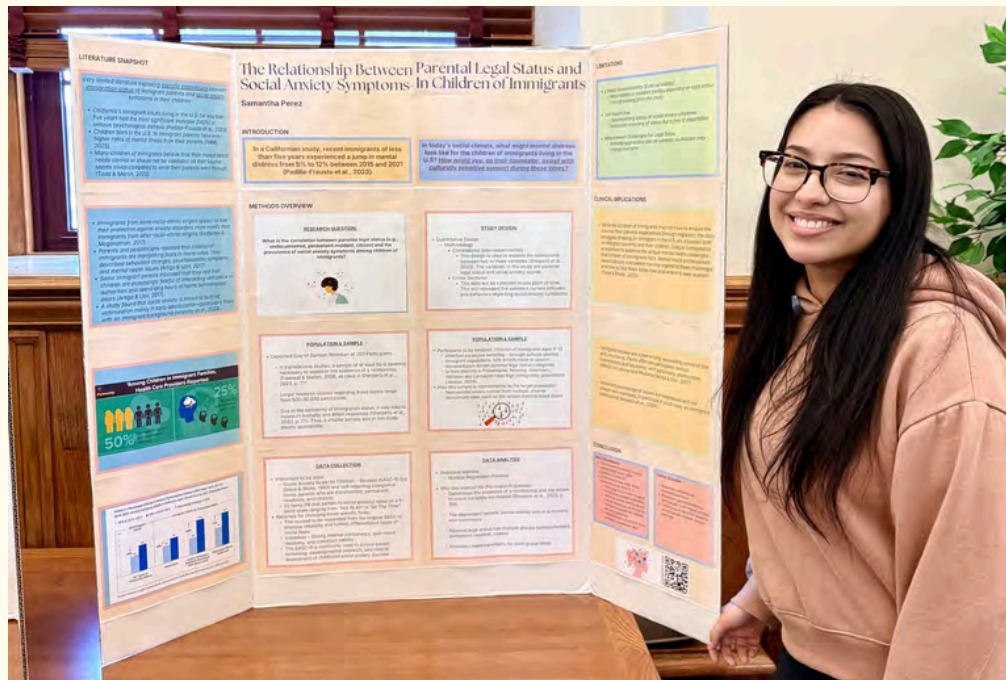
Reducing Acculturative Stress Among
International College Students



Marrisa O. Moore

The CASE for Competence: An Examination of Adoption-Competent Practitioners in Pennsylvania Program Evaluation with Clinical Implications and Future Directions for Research

RESEARCH METHODS RESEARCH PROPOSAL POSTERS



Samantha Perez

The Relationship Between Parental Legal Status and Social Anxiety Symptoms In Children of Immigrants



Sarah Miller

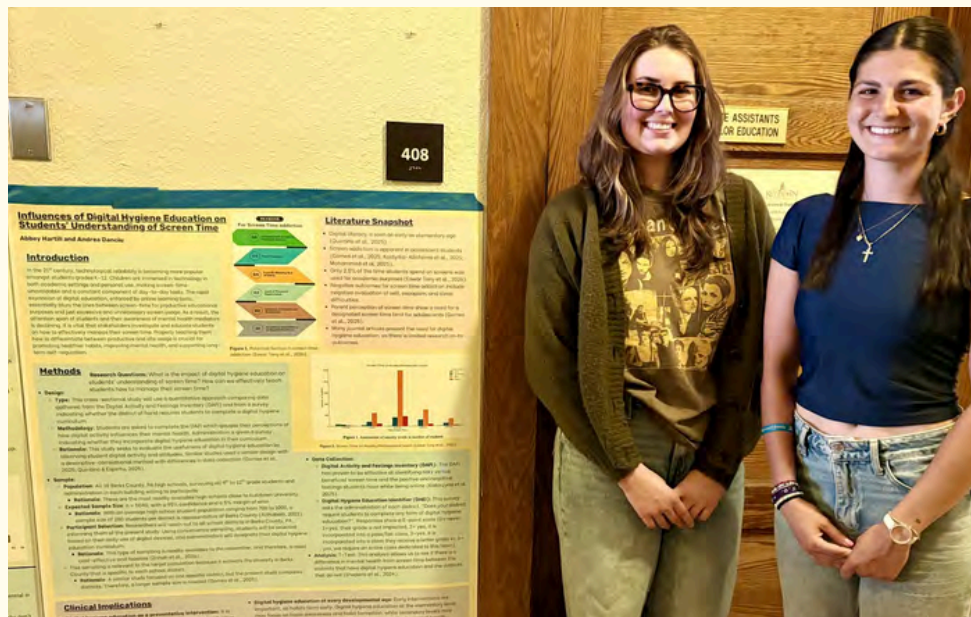
Appearance-Focused Social Media Engagement, Identity Development, and Eating-Related Pathology in Emerging Adults: A Quantitative Research Proposal

RESEARCH METHODS RESEARCH PROPOSAL POSTERS



Carly Comando

The Influencer Impact- How TikTok Therapist Content Influences Client Expectations



Abbey Hartill & Andrea Danciu

Influences of Digital Hygiene Education on Students' Understanding of Screen Time

COUNSELING STUDENT AND GRADUATE ASSISTANT AT THE SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER RECOGNIZED

MADDISON STANLEY, Community Outreach Coordinator and Graduate Assistant at the Kutztown University Small Business Development Center (SBDC), has been leading strategic initiatives to strengthen connections between Kutztown University, local businesses and the broader Kutztown community. Her recent work has focused on increasing engagement across campus departments, KU-affiliated businesses and Main Street organizations while expanding awareness of the SBDC as a key resource for both students and the public. One of Stanley's key initiatives was



successfully integrating the Kutztown SBDC into the official Kutztown University campus tour route. This effort highlights entrepreneurship as a viable career pathway for students across all majors, while also introducing visiting families and prospective students to the SBDC's no-cost consulting services. As part of the Pennsylvania SBDC network, which includes 15 locations statewide, the Kutztown SBDC uniquely serves both the university community and the broader public. Stanley also collaborated with local Main Street businesses to develop the KU Town Map Project. This initiative encourages campus visitors to explore Kutztown beyond the university by supporting local businesses, whether through dining, shopping or experiencing the town's offerings. The project strengthens the relationship between the university and the local economy, driving visibility and foot traffic to small businesses. These efforts reflect the Kutztown SBDC's commitment to experiential learning by empowering students to lead projects that align with their academic interests, career goals, and personal passions. Through her work, Stanley has enhanced community engagement, elevated the visibility of entrepreneurship resources, and contributed to a stronger connection between Kutztown University and the local business ecosystem.

-Written by Rachael Wolfe from the Kutztown University Small Business Development Center

Maddison is looking forward to seeing how the work she did with the KU Town Map Project will continue to grow in the future after her graduation this Spring.



**Amaryllis Rivera (Carrion)**

Since starting at KU, I've been fortunate to hold two Graduate Assistant positions—my current role supporting Dr. Keyes with the Children's Literature Conference, and a previous role assisting Dr. Norris with research. These opportunities have allowed me to learn, grow, and collaborate closely with dedicated colleagues and professors across the university. Walking alongside my peers has helped me recognize the unique strengths each individual brings to our community. The diversity of experiences and perspectives at Kutztown has truly made a lasting impression on me. My time on campus has also been shaped by meaningful service

and advocacy work, including volunteering with Dr. Brenner at the summer bereavement program, Camp Connect, and participating in the NAMI club, which aligns closely with my counseling interests. These experiences have enriched my personal and professional development, and I am excited to continue learning and contributing to the KU community.

**ROMAN MOSER**

Hi! My name is Roman Moser, and I am a second-year graduate student in the Clinical Mental Health track. I'm a former collegiate wrestler who graduated with a bachelor's in psychology from Kutztown University. I just completed my independent research study that focuses on discovering the impact that weight cutting has on the anxiety and quality of life in collegiate wrestlers. I plan to take this study and advance it into my eventual Ph.D. research and dissertation. I want to incorporate my interest in chronic stress and anxiety among athletes and my newfound research focus on the benefits of nature for mental and physical health. I'm also excited to begin my GA

position as a mentor in the My Place Program, as it aligns with my passion to work within the Kutztown Community. I look forward to the opportunities and experience my GA position will bring to my education.

myPLACE

ENHANCED AUTISM
SUPPORT SERVICES

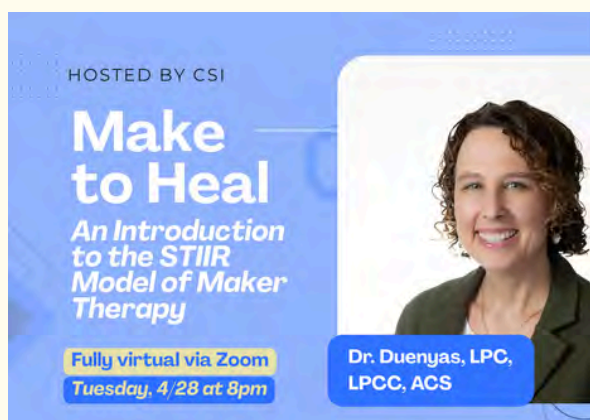


LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

On Tuesday, March, 31st 2026, Kutztown alumnus Eric Rusiewicz joined CSI to share insights on what to expect post-graduation. Topics covered included applying for licensure, compensation packages, and therapy practice red and green flags to look out for when applying for professional counseling positions.

OUT OF THE DARKNESS WALK & COUNSELING SKILLS LAB

On Sunday, April 19th, CSI E-board attended and hosted a table at NAMI's Out of the Darkness Walk for suicide prevention and awareness. On Tuesday, April 21st, CSI members and nonmembers participated in a practice counseling lab hosted by CSI-COU 25-27 Secretary Savannah Aykol.



MAKE TO HEAL

On Tuesday, April 28th, CSI hosted former Kutztown University Counselor Education and Student Affairs Department faculty member, Dr. Deborah Duenyas, who led CSI members and nonmembers in a maker therapy activity. She used the STIIR Model: Space, Tinker, Ideate, Innovate, Reflect.

PUB SOCIAL

On Tuesday, May 5th, Kutztown University Alumni Elliot Elbaum LAPC, NCC, join CSI members and nonmembers at the K'Town Pub for the last social mixer of the semester. This pub social is a way to end out the year with a fun night while also being able to talk to someone on the other side!





President-Elect: Mikeala Scott

I am a Clinical Counseling student, and this is my first year at Kutztown. I work as the Recreation Center graduate assistant and also teach group fitness (a love of mine) both on campus and at three other gyms throughout the year.



Vice President-Elect: Amy Flannery

I am a first-year graduate student looking to become a school counselor. I am a graduate assistant in athletics and love spending time outdoors!



Secretary-Elect: Melanie McHugh

I am a graduate student in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program and a GA in the Career Development Center. I am passionate about empowerment-based approaches that center clients' voices and actively challenge systemic barriers in counseling spaces.



Treasurer-Elect: Marrisa Moore

I work as a GA in the Psychology Department and I am the director of a summer camp program at my local YMCA. I am currently conducting research working on advocacy and adequate counseling services for transracial adoptees.



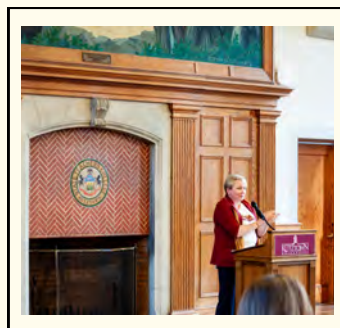
Member-at-Large-Elect: Alexis Vincent

I am a graduate assistant at the Office of Student Involvement and an advisor for the Kutztown University Activities Club! Now I am a proud member and board member of CSI :)

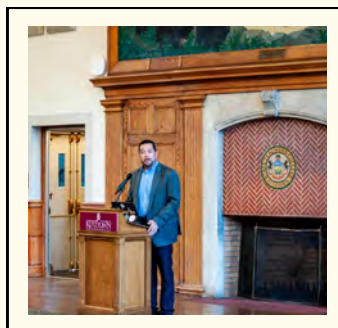
2026 CHI SIGMA IOTA CHI OMEGA UPSILON CHAPTER INDUCTION CEREMONY



Dr. Philip Cavalier
President of KU



Dr. Rebecca Burns
Dean, College of
Education



Dr. Carl Sheperis
Vice Provost
Dean of Graduate
Studies



Dr. Fred Redekop
Former Professor
and Scholarship
Donor

Thank you to our speakers!



CONGRATULATIONS CSI-COU 2026 INDUCTEES

Liliana Altomare, Caroline Bailey, Britney Burro, Kashmiera Consenza, Irina Delvalle, Arylissa Diaz-Lopez, Amy Flannery, Nicholas Garofalo, Stephanie Helt, Jonathan Hesbol, Linda Hidalgo, Benjamin Hunsenberger, Sara Hunter, Samantha Koller, Tatiana Martinez, Melanie Mchugh, Marrisa Moore, Samantha Moran, Roman Moser, Ashley Nelson, Emily Nocente, Gabriel Plotnikov, Gianni Rodriguez-Caceres, Loris Rodriguez Rodriguez, Lillianna Roman, Kaylee Sam, Mikaela Scott, Dakota Sell, Elias Shetayh, Rachel Smith, Maddison Stanley, Madeline Stroud, Abigail Tapia, Emma Taylor, Brooke Turkowski, Melissa Ulrich, Alexis Vincent, Mercedes Weaver

2026 CHI SIGMA IOTA CHI OMEGA UPSILON CHAPTER SERVICE AWARDS



Carly Comando
Outstanding CMHC
Student



Naila Mendez
Outstanding CMHC Student



Jonathan Hesbol
Outstanding Addiction
Counseling Student



Ashh Nelson
Outstanding School
Counseling Student



Gloria Velasquez
MA Supervisor of the Year



Liayn Morris
MS Supervisor of the Year



**DeSales University
Counseling Center**
MA Site of the Year



**Governor Mifflin
Middle School**
MS Site of the Year



Mallory Stevens-Carr
Alumni of the Year



Dr. Helen Hamlet
Lifetime Achievement Award



Breann Craley 2024-2025
Past President Award

THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO!



2025-2026 CSI-COU Executive Board



2026-2027 CSI-COU Executive Board

Special Thank you to...



2025-2026
Faculty Advisor
Dr. Scott Tracy

Pianist:
Kimberly Leamon



Kutztown University Out of the Darkness Campus Walk

The Kutztown University Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI-KU) and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) held KU's annual fundraising walk for suicide prevention. In its 12th year, the "Out of the Darkness" walk took place on Sunday, April 19th, 2026. All proceeds from the walk benefit the AFSP. With more than 100 participants joining the walk, over \$11,000 was raised this year! Hundreds of dollars were raised by Rachel Smith, a counseling graduate student who is also a graduate assistant at the Veteran's Center. Registration for the walk is required and donations can be made at the [AFSP Kutztown Walk website](#).

Patricia Brenner, NAMI Advisor, Kutztown Chapter



Aubrey Shields



Hello, my name is Aubrey Shields. One of the best decisions I ever made was coming to Kutztown University for the School Counseling Certification and Licensure program. As a 2021 graduate, I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to learn from some of the best professors while also growing alongside classmates who quickly became colleagues and friends. Since graduating, I have worked in three different school districts, and each experience has helped shape me as a school counselor.

I began my career at Pottsville Area School District, where I served as the first-ever school counselor at John S. Clarke Elementary. Supporting a little over 800 students on my own was challenging, but it helped me grow so much both professionally and personally. ROLL TIDE! After that, I returned to Muhlenberg School District, where I attended high school, and had the opportunity to work alongside other school counselors at Muhlenberg Elementary Center. That teamwork reminded me how meaningful it is when school counselors can support one another within the same building while helping students. This opportunity is rare in elementary schools but deeply needed. I am currently a school counselor at Green Valley Elementary in the Wilson School District, where I previously worked with students in grades 3–5 and now support students in grades K–2.

Each district brought something special to my journey. Pottsville taught me independence and resilience, Muhlenberg gave me a sense of familiarity and community, and Wilson has shown me the power of strong collaboration and the importance of balancing life, work, and learning. One personal thing about me is that I am a recent cancer survivor, and it is something I will always celebrate. That experience gave me a different perspective on life and has helped me connect with students and families who have also been touched by cancer. My job is not always easy, but it is one of the most rewarding roles I have ever had the privilege to do.

If I could give any advice to current school counseling graduate students, it would be to step outside of your comfort zone and take on opportunities at schools or districts that you may not have initially considered. I always thought I would end up working with middle school or secondary students, but I completed my internship at an elementary school and quickly fell in love with it. I am currently finishing my fifth year as a professional school counselor and would love to support graduate students looking for practicum or internship placements in the coming years.

MORGAN CALVARESI



Morgan Calvaresi is a proud double alumna of Kutztown University. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Psychology with a minor in Sociology in 2016, and her Master of Education in School Counseling in 2019. During her graduate studies, Morgan was an active member of Chi Sigma Iota, the international honor society for counseling professionals. Since graduation, she has served as a school counselor in the Reading School District at Central Middle School, the largest middle school in the district, serving about 2,000 students in grades 5 through 8. In her role, she loops with her students alongside her fellow counselors, supporting them across multiple years and building strong, lasting relationships that support academic, social, and emotional growth. Morgan currently serves as the School Counseling Department Head for her building and has taken on various leadership roles within her school and district. She has mentored new school counselors that entered her district, supporting their transition and professional development. In addition, she is giving back to her alma mater by serving as a placement supervisor for her first practicum student, who is currently enrolled in KU's School Counseling program.

Morgan's favorite part of her career has been the opportunity to grow alongside her students. She had the benefit of looping with her first group of students for all four years of middle school and now is currently in seventh grade with her second cohort of students. Looping has allowed her to build meaningful, lasting connections during some of their most critical years. Seeing her first group of students now as eleventh graders and reconnecting with them during visits to the high school has become a powerful reminder of her "why." Witnessing their growth over time and knowing she played a role in their journey continues to deepen her passion for urban education and her firm commitment to advocating for every student she serves. Morgan is currently living in Muhlenberg Township with her husband, two daughters, and two huskies. Reflecting on her time at Kutztown, she shares, "My time at Kutztown was a vital chapter in my life that taught me so much beyond what is learned in the classroom, especially about myself. I am especially grateful to the amazing professors in the Counselor Education Department who left a lasting impact on me."

SONIA ROMO



Hello (Hola!!) My name is Sonia Romo, a May 2017 graduate from Kutztown University counseling program with a degree in Mental Health Counseling. I am a bilingual Licensed Associate Professional Counselor (LAPC). I have been working in the mental health field for the past 15 plus years. My past career focus was working in psychiatric hospitals, outpatient settings, private practices, non-profit organizations, and shelter programs. I have been at Bethany Children's Home for the past 6 plus years as a clinical therapist. Within these six years I was a clinician for five years for unaccompanied children. Along with currently working in this non-profit organization, I am also a clinical therapist at Emotional Compass, an outpatient provider. I am currently a doctorate student as of 2022, at Immaculata University pursuing a PsyD (Doctor of Clinical Psychology).

As a therapist, I focus on integrative type modeled therapy, which combines multiple techniques from different therapeutic modalities- such as Cognitive Behavior Therapy, psychodynamics, and humanistic therapy. My focus is for individuals to believe in their capacity for growth, healing, and change. As a clinical therapist my hope is always for the client to feel

supported by providing an empathetic environment where they are being heard, valued, and understood. My goal during the therapeutic process is to be able to provide the client with feeling empowered by recognizing their strengths, increasing resilience, and creating a positive change aligned with their personal values.

Within the last 10 plus years, my passion has been working with children and families. I have experience working with concerns such as anxiety, depression, attachment, childhood trauma, borderline personality disorder, troubled teens, stress management, and life transitions. I am trained in many areas of expertise; Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, trauma informed care, attachment, play therapy approaches, art modalities, psychodrama, and experiential-relational. I believe these modalities help to promote emotional regulation skills, healthier thoughts patterns, emotional expression and healing in developmentally appropriate ways. My aim is to help children, adults, and families develop practical tools, gain self-awareness, build emotional resilience, improve self-confidence and feel empowered to create positive and sustainable changes in their lives.

My passion is to continue to help those who want to find their way to a healing life path. Like I always say "Endless Possibilities" to making positive changes. Or as we Mexicans like to also say "Si Se Puede" (YOU CAN DO IT).

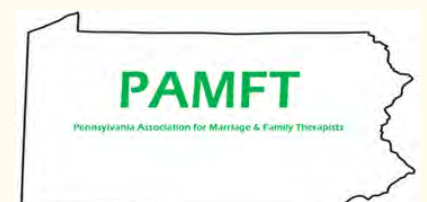
Audrey Snyder, LMFT



Audrey received her MA in Marriage Couple and Family Counseling from Kutztown in 2022. She spent four years working toward this degree while navigating first-time motherhood and beginning her counseling internship amidst the Covid pandemic. She feels grateful to have received this crash course in both virtual and in-person therapy during her agency internship and in her subsequent four years serving Reading in community mental health. Audrey now sees couples, families and individuals at Continuum Counseling and Clinical Services, a private practice in Wyomissing PA where she has been for the past two years. She feels passionate about deepening her knowledge of

trauma informed approaches for the family. Audrey is proud to have gained her License in Marriage and Family Therapy in August 2025 and willingly offers herself as a resource to others pursuing this licensure. Audrey feels honored to be part of the KU community and is grateful to the Counseling Department for helping her build a solid career foundation. A Berks county native, she hasn't gone too far and continues to call Oley Valley home. These days you can find her wedding planning with her fiancé, baking, running 5ks or romping around the woods with her now nine-year-old son. Audrey can be reached at: asnyder@continuumllc.org

Marriage & Family Therapist Licensure



Shanna Yarush



Shanna obtained her Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree with highest honors from Kutztown University in 2020, as well as her undergraduate degree in psychology in 2017. She has worked with people throughout the lifespan in her six years since graduation, with a special interest in working with younger children using a play therapy model. She believes that people bring unique experiences into therapy, and that the best approach is client centered, trauma informed, and tailored to individuals' needs. Shanna feels that her time at Kutztown truly prepared her to help her clients work through hardship. She began a career in community mental health

where she did her practicum and internship, and moved into private practice several years later. She is currently working with a telehealth company that specializes in CBT treatment for children 8 and up. Working here has given her an appreciation for eclectic approaches to therapy. She firmly believes that having an outlet to communicate needs is essential. Shanna provides this outlet in creating a safe space for her clients. Shanna is an LGBTQ+ affirming therapist, body positive therapist, and genuinely believes each client has the potential for success. Shanna's ideals were shaped during her time at Kutztown where she was an active member in the Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance and the LGBTQ center. Shanna is also currently expecting her first baby, due in October of 2026, with her husband Derek whom she met during her time at Kutztown. When not working, Shanna enjoys reading on her kindle, sitting in front of a fire, or listening to true crime podcasts.



BOXWOOD HOUSE



CONGRATULATIONS 2026 GRADS!!



As part of a yearly tradition, students who are graduating from the Counselor Education and Student Affairs Department are congratulated and celebrated at an Internship picnic held at Kutztown Park. The event is the last “requirement” of the students’ programs before graduation. Here are some highlights:



VET CENTER

EST. 1979



ARE YOU AN ASPIRING MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL INTERESTED IN CARING FOR AMERICA'S VETERANS?

If so, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) invites you to apply for the Vet Center (Readjustment Counseling Service) Scholarship.

Through the Vet Center scholarship, the VA is offering educational assistance to **students pursuing a Master's degree in Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT), and a Master's or Doctorate degree as a Licensed Professional Mental Health Counselor (LPMHC), and lastly those pursuing a Doctorate degree in Psychology.**

In return, we're asking selected applicants to join our growing Vet Center team full time for a period of six years after graduation.

Vet Centers are community-based counseling centers that provide a wide range of social and psychological services, including professional readjustment counseling to eligible Veterans, active-duty service members, including National Guard and Reserve components, and their families.

Key Requirements:

- U.S. citizenship (U.S. Veterans will be considered first among all equally qualified candidates)
- Currently enrollment or unconditionally accepted into a qualified degree program as stated above.
- Selection criteria includes academic performance, work experience, faculty and employer recommendations, and career goals
- All candidates will be subject to a background/suitability investigation.
- To officially accept the scholarship, selected applicants must sign a mobility agreement as well as an agreement to complete a service obligation of six years at a Vet Center after graduating and obtaining necessary licensure/certification.

To apply for the new Vet Center Scholarship Program shoot the QR code with your camera or follow the link: <https://va-ams.intelliworx.com/webapp/register/10-0491g/applicant.view>



To find more information about Vet Centers use the QR Code or follow the link: <https://vetcenter.va.gov>



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration



VAcareers.va.gov

Associate Counselor License

On the 28th of March, 2024 Act 4, was signed into law in Pennsylvania. The law allows new professional counselors and marriage and family therapists who hold a master's degree to apply to work as licensed associate marriage and family therapists (LAMFTs) and licensed associate professional counselors (LAPCs) With the new licensure, graduates can now work with various companies beyond traditional behavioral health agencies, potentially leading to better pay and career prospects.

The act is expected to simplify insurance reimbursement processes for professionals aiming for independent licensure.

Requirements:

Master's Degree or Doctoral Degree	3 Hours of Continuing Education
No Examination	\$75.00 Initial Fee
Submission of Supervision Plan & Supervisor's Credentials	\$95.00 Renewal Fee

ACA Practicum & Internship Site Finder

<https://www.counseling.org/resources/career-center/internship-opportunities>

Managing Stress During Practicum/Internship

<https://connect.springerpub.com/content/book/978-0-8261-4303-7/chapter/ch08>

What I've Learned as a New Professional Counselor

<https://www.counseling.org/publications/counseling-today-magazine/article-archive/article/legacy/what-i-learned-as-a-new-professional-counselor>

Obtaining Liability Insurance

School Counseling Students can obtain liability insurance through the ASCA website.

<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Membership/Proof-of-Insurance>

MA Clinical, Marriage & Family, and Addiction students, can obtain the insurance through the ACA website.

<https://www.counseling.org/membership/faqs>

For either ASCA or ACA, in order to get the liability insurance you have to first become a member.



Campus Resources

Career Development Center

Offers career planning resources, job searching support, developing a realistic career plan, create effective applications, interviewing prep, workshops, individual career counseling, resume and cover letter review, and practicum and internship search

<https://www.kutztown.edu/about-ku/administrative-offices/career-development-center/for-graduate-students.html>

Writing Center

<https://kutztownwritingcenter.wordpress.com/>

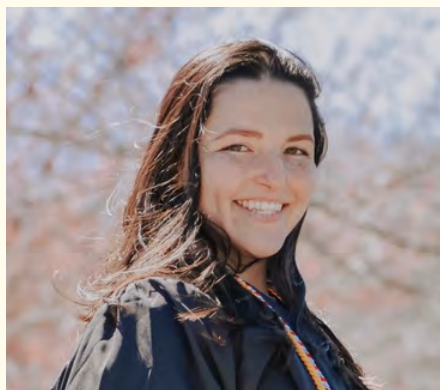
Counselor Education and Student Affairs

<https://www.kutztown.edu/academics/colleges-and-departments/education/academic-departments/counselor-education-and-student-affairs.html>

Practicum/Internship Information sheet

<https://www.kutztown.edu/Departments-Offices/A-F/CounselingStudentAffairs/Documents/Handbook/HandbookPracticumAndInternship.pdf>

WELCOME BACK SECOND YEAR GRADUATE ASSISTANT ANGELA LEAMON!!



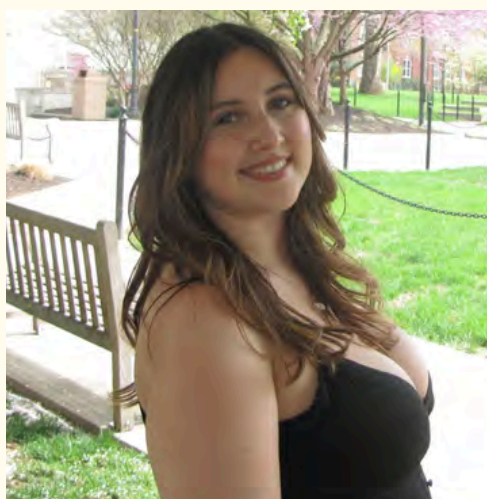
Thank you so much for having me back and continuing to help me grow as I continue on my counseling journey. I can't believe that I'm $\frac{2}{3}$ through the School Counseling program!! I can't wait to start my Internship at a High School in the fall! One of my passions, which this program helped me figure out, is college and career counseling. On top of that I am a big advocate for student wellness in all respects and I am excited to see what I can do as a profesional School Counselor in the future.

WELCOME BACK GRADUATE ASSISTANT LAUREN SUTER!

I am so grateful to be a graduate assistant in the Counseling Department! I studied psychology and art at Cal Poly Humboldt. Career wise, I have worked in the autism community, first providing ABA therapy in the home and community, then trained in a qigong massage for sensory integration, and for the past 5 years I worked in the public school system which culminated in a year spent as a Special Education teacher. I have long dreamed of having a therapeutic farm that integrates my other passions for holistic health, advocacy, and permaculture.



WELCOME NEW UNDERGRADUATE ASSISTANT CARA MCMAHON!



Hello! My name is Cara and I'm the new undergraduate assistant. I'm from Abington, PA, which is right outside Philadelphia. I am a junior Psychology major here at KU. I also minor in Social Work and Case Management. I'm vice president of the Psychology Club as well as secretary for NAMI. Some of my hobbies include reading whenever I have the free time to do so. I have six siblings so when I'm home, I love to spend time with them. In the near future, I hope to attend grad school for Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything. I look forward to getting to know everyone!

Stay Golden!