



ELEVATING ADVOCACY

SAIGE 2024 • GOLDEN, COLORADO

OCTOBER 4TH & 5TH

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS
OF SAIGE CONFERENCES

SAIGE

Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex,
and Gender Expansive Identities

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Conference Information

Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that the land on which this conference is taking place resides within the traditional territories of Hinonoeino (Arapaho), Tsitsista (Cheyenne), and Nunt'zi (Ute). We recognize the descendant communities of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe of Montana, the Northern Arapaho Tribe of Wyoming, the Southern Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. We also acknowledge that over 40 different Indigenous nations continue to be in relation with the lands currently called Colorado. Denver is home to many different citizens of Indigenous nations, and we recognize their enduring presence on this land by paying respects to their elders, both past and present. Please take a moment to consider the legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and resettlement that bring us together today and please join us in uncovering such truths at all public events. Now is the time to reflect upon and personally reconcile how the genocidal acts against Indigenous communities intersect with our learning, collaboration, and sharing of knowledge.

*Adapted from the
Morgridge College of Education
at the University of Denver*

Welcome to the Conference!

Welcome to the 2024 SAIGE Conference in Golden, Colorado! We're excited to host this year's conference in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and hope that you're able to find some time to explore and enjoy the beauty around us while you're in town. Some quick pro tips for any out-of-towners as you settle in here in Golden, at 5,700 feet above sea level: drink **a lot** of water, drink a little less of other things, pace yourself with physical activity, and enjoy your time here!

2024 marks the 10th anniversary of SAIGE's (referred to as ALGBTIC, at the time) inaugural conference, held in New Orleans, Louisiana in 2014. Since that time, we have seen mountains of growth in the quality of life, services, rights, and research related to LGBTGEQIAP+ communities. Reflecting on how far we've come over the last decade, in light of how far we still need to go, this year's conference theme aims to highlight the work that is already being done, inspire new approaches toward effecting change, build the confidence of students and professionals who might be reluctant to engage in advocacy efforts, and to broaden our awareness of needs and opportunities within our communities – it aims to **elevate advocacy**.



This year's conference proposal process was one of the most competitive in our organization's history. The quality of submissions was such that the conference committee chose not to stop at the allotted number of in-person presentations, but to expand the conference's offerings to include pre-recorded education sessions, which will be accessible following the conference. We encourage attendees, both remote and in-person, to take advantage of all of the content that is available to you!

For those attending in-person, the conference committee has worked tirelessly to build a conference experience that is warm, educational, and provides opportunities to connect with one another while taking care of yourselves. We hope that you will join us for breakfast and lunch on both conference days, as well as a reception with light refreshments on Friday evening. Happy conferencing!

With Appreciation & Warmth,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stacy A. Pinto". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Stacy A. Pinto, PhD, NCC (she/they)
2024 – 2025 President, SAIGE

Venue Information



Denver Marriott West
Golden, Colorado

Meeting Rooms

(see next page for a map of the conference area)

All activities will be held in the following locations, unless otherwise specified.

- Main Floor (2nd floor): Salons A-D
- 1st floor: Vail Meeting Room
- 1st Floor: Beaver Creek Meeting Room

Restrooms

Gender neutral restrooms are available on the 1st floor, outside of the Vail and Beaver Creek Meeting rooms.

Gendered restrooms are available on the Main floor (2nd floor), outside of Salons A-D.



Venue Map



Conference Support

Registration Desk

Located in the Hallway outside of Salons A – D, Main Floor

- o Thursday, October 3rd: 5:00pm - 7:00pm
- o Friday, October 4th: 7:45am - 5:00pm
- o Saturday, October 5th: 7:45am - 5:00pm

Conference Volunteers

Throughout the event, Conference Volunteers will be available in all meeting rooms, as well as at the Registration Desk, and sometimes floating between locations. Conference Volunteers can be identified by their orange-colored conference lanyards. They will be happy to connect you with the appropriate individuals to support your needs and/or curiosities!





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The National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. and Affiliates (NBCC) leverages the power of counselor certification to expand equitable access to highly qualified counselors and mental health resources. NBCC provides many resources that foster counselors' career growth, including credentials with professional eligibility and ethical standards; high-integrity, accessible examinations; an open-access, peer-reviewed counseling journal; and scholarship and professional development opportunities. Through legislative coalitions, advocacy, and policy research, NBCC propels counselor engagement to advance the profession at federal and state levels.



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ACA Membership + SAIGE Membership = Better Together

When you join the American Counseling Association (ACA), you enhance your SAIGE membership with access to more opportunities to build community, deepen your knowledge and develop your commitment to enriching lives and contributing to societal well-being.

Discover more about ACA ▶



Conference Meetings

QTPOC Meeting

Friday, October 4th, 1:00pm

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Description: Join your hosts in this space as an opportunity for QTPOC attendees to connect, express themselves, and engage in dialogue critical to SAIGE's mission.

Hosted by Sheldon Aaron, Emerging Leaders Co-Chair & Mariangelly Sierra, Board Trustee, Multicultural & Social Justice Concerns

Membership & State Branch Meeting & Lunch

Saturday, October 5th, 11:45am

Salons A-D, Main Floor

Description: Join your hosts, during lunch, for an opportunity to engage in discussion about SAIGE and its branches, including emphasis on sharing knowledge across branches, understanding needs of membership and branches, and facilitating connection among SAIGE members!

Hosted by Sandra Gavin, Trustee of Membership and Marlon Johnson, Trustee of State Branches

Graduate Student Meeting

Saturday, October 5th, 1:00pm

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Description: Join fellow masters and doctoral student attendees for an open discussion and opportunity to network.

Hosted by Brandon Marrerro, Student Trustee

Board Meeting (Board Members Only)

Saturday, October 5th, 5:30pm



Conference Events

Registration Desk, Hallway of Salons A-D, Main Floor

- o Thursday, October 3rd: 5:00 - 7:00pm
- o Friday, October 4th: 7:45am - 5:00pm
- o Saturday, October 5th: 7:45am - 5:00pm

Breakfast & Welcome

Friday, October 4th, 8:00-9:00 am

Salons A – D, Main Floor

Keynote & Lunch

Friday, October 4th, 11:45am-1:15pm

Salons A – D, Main Floor

Reception

Friday, October 4th, 6:00-8:00pm

Monarch Room, Main Floor

Join us for an opportunity to gather with one another for some light refreshments, a cash bar, and the awarding of SAIGE's *Mark Pope Social Justice & Advocacy Award*.

Breakfast & Networking

Saturday, October 5th, 8:00-9:00 am

Salons A – D, Main Floor

Lunch & Membership/State Branch Meetings

Saturday, October 5th, 11:45am –1:15pm

Salons A – D, Main Floor

Conference Keynote

Dr. Jax Gonzalez

Political Director at One Colorado

Friday, October 4th, 12:00pm MT

Session ID: 101

Jax Gonzalez (they/them), PhD, MEd is a first-generation college student and queer and trans community organizer who has dedicated their career to community organizing toward collective liberation. With a dedication to bridging the gap between direct services and systemic social change, they have built a specialized expertise in social justice youth development, civil rights, education policy, and health equity. Jax is based in Denver, Colorado and when they aren't working toward collective liberation, they love a good puzzle, throwing pottery, exploring hot springs with their partner & playing with their tiny dog Nora.

Salons A – D, Main Floor



Continuing Education Units

To receive your continuing education units, please complete the appropriate SAIGE 2024 Conference CEU Survey. A separate survey is required for each session that you attend.

In-Person Sessions on October 4th & 5th

All Education Sessions and the Conference Keynote carry 1 CEU each. Please use the URL or QR code provided here to access the SAIGE 2024 Conference CEU Survey. The same survey link will be used for all sessions.

<https://bit.ly/SAIGE2024>

Please note that if you indicate you attended sessions that occurred at the same time, you will not receive credit for either session.



Virtual Sessions from October 7th – November 10th

The Virtual Component of the SAIGE 2024 Conference offers up to 10 additional CEUs and is available to all individuals registered for either an in-person or virtual-only conference ticket. It can be accessed from October 7th through November 10th.

Instructions to access the content and complete the CEU Surveys will be emailed to the email address that you used to register for the conference. A unique URL will be provided for each session. All portions of the survey, including the post-test questions, must be completed to earn the associated CEU.



All CEU Surveys, for both In-Person and Virtual sessions, must be completed no later than **November 15, 2024**. CEU Certificates will be emailed by December 1, 2024.

Questions can be directed to Education@SAIGECounseling.org.

Photo Scavenger Hunt

Participate in our Photo Scavenger Hunt for an opportunity to win a free registration for next year's conference. The first three submissions with all 16 photos (see prompts within survey below) will be awarded a free registration for the SAIGE 2025 Virtual Conference!



<https://bit.ly/SAIGEPHOTOHUNT>

Elevating Advocacy: Virtual Component

Pre-Recorded Virtual Education Sessions

LGBP Polyamorous Relationship Formation and Development

Session ID: 131

The normalization of hetero- and mono-normativity contributed to biases and discriminations against consensual non-monogamy (CNM). Such a phenomenon is also prevalent in counseling settings where CNM clients face biased and microaggressive behaviors from their counselors (e.g., being judgmental, pathologizing, dismissive, overly focused on relationship orientation). In the face of minority stress, participants in several studies reported the same or a higher level of relationship satisfaction in their CNM relationship compared to their monogamous counterparts. These findings suggest these individuals may have developed strengths and resilience in adversity to build a satisfying and meaningful relationship. To date, only three studies have focused on exploring polyamorous relationship satisfaction. Their findings are consistent with those of studies on CNM relationship quality in terms of high levels of relationship satisfaction, with some within-group differences between hierarchical and non-hierarchical polyamory. It is worth noting that all three studies are quantitative and not centered on polyamorous individuals who are non-heterosexual, which leaves room to explore more nuanced relationship experiences within this population through qualitative methods. Therefore, we aimed to explore polyamorous relationship experiences and the ascribed meanings of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and pansexual individuals. In this presentation, we will present the findings of a recent IPA (interpretative phenomenological analysis) study, highlighting the stress and resilience in the early stages of polyamorous relationship development. In addition, we will also provide implications for counselors to adopt poly-affirming counseling and recommendations for future research.

Presented by: Jiale Man, Emily Kay Anderson, Blake Cunningham, Pei-Yu Lee & Zoltan Wolfe

The Duality of Grief During Transition: Exploring Transgender Experiences

Session ID: 136

This session is about the ways in which grief and loss have manifested in the transgender experience. Sharing findings from their qualitative study, the authors shed light on how transgender individuals navigate the complex terrain of grief that encompasses both tangible and intangible losses. Mental health professionals who understand this historical marginalization and possess knowledge of appropriate modalities can be a powerful source of support. The goals of this session are to contribute to participants' knowledge around the counseling-specific needs of this community. Central to the discussion is the ethical responsibility of mental health professionals to develop competencies that can better support the transgender community through their unique grief and loss experiences. This involves recognizing the multifaceted nature of loss experienced by

transgender individuals and ensuring that counseling practices are inclusive and affirming of their identities and experiences. The authors will provide suggestions for practicing competently and ethically within this scope.

Presented by: Carly Boren & Sage W. Rian

ASKed & answered: LGBTQ+ persons perspectives on counselor/client "fit"

Session ID: 142

What does a counseling “fit” look like? What are LGBTQ+ clients looking for in a counselor-client “fit”? This presentation will explore the findings of a study that sought to explore what LGBTQ+ clients found as both helpful and unhelpful in the counseling relationship. During the study, participants (counseling clients) shared their experiences not only of the counseling experience itself, but also how difficult it was to navigate counseling profiles and find a counselor who would meet their individual needs - based on their diagnoses and/or symptoms and their LGBTQ+ identity/ies. This presentation will address the ways by which counselors can become a better fit for LGBTQ+ clients. We will invite participants to consider ways to make themselves more accessible to clients. Finally, we will challenge counselors to further advocate in their own communities by encouraging their counseling peers to assess their own fit with LGBTQ+ clients prior to naming themselves as a LGBTQ+ affirming counselors.

Presented by: Valerie Moreno-Tucker & Suzanne Degges-White

Is it Depression or Is It Oppression: An Exploration of Diagnosis

Session ID: 158

Research has indicated higher rates of depressive disorders in the LGBTQIAP+ community when compared to straight cisgender youth, such as major depressive disorder or pervasive depressive disorder. Depressive disorders in adolescence are considered to be a risk factor for suicide which is the second leading cause of death in the United States. Rates of suicide by adolescents has continued to rise in the United States and is around 6.5% (Hink et al. 2022). As reported by the Trevor Project (2022), 14% of youth in the LGBTQIAP+ youth attempted suicide in the past year. While the rates of depression are higher, the research does not explore if the symptoms of depression are related to the ongoing marginalization and oppression of individuals who identify in the LGBTQIAP+ community. We will explore the DSM and discuss depressive symptomology and whether or not we as clinicians are pathologizing the marginalization of individuals in the LGBTQIAP+ community rather than addressing the systemic injustices and traumas.

Presented by: Karissa Spurgeon, Grace Vocaina, Tori Haynes, & Dominique DiPeppo

Addressing Microaggressions Toward Non-Binary Counselors

Session ID: 162

This program is aimed at addressing the pervasive issue of microaggressions towards non-binary counselors within the counseling profession. Microaggressions, subtle yet harmful expressions of discrimination or bias, can have profound effects on the mental health and well-being of non-binary individuals. This program seeks to raise awareness, foster dialogue, and provide practical strategies for counselors to create affirming and inclusive environments for all counselors, regardless of their gender identity. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of the intersectional nature of identity and learn to recognize and address microaggressions. The program will also provide opportunities for participants to engage in self-reflection and dialogue, examining their own biases and privilege and exploring ways to cultivate empathy and understanding towards non-binary colleagues. Practical strategies for creating affirming and validating environments will be shared, including effective communication techniques, advocacy approaches, and allyship strategies. Additionally, the program will highlight the ethical imperatives and professional responsibilities of counselors in addressing microaggressions and promoting social justice within the counseling profession. Participants will learn about relevant ethical guidelines and standards and explore the role of advocacy in creating systemic change to combat discrimination and promote inclusivity. Counselors will enhance their cultural competence and awareness while learning how to contribute to creating a more equitable and supportive professional community.

Presented by: DJ Griffith

Supervising Cases of Religious Trauma in the LGBTGEQIAP+ Community: A Component-Based Approach to Supervision

Session ID: 164

How can supervisors support emerging counselors in effectively applying the ACA ethical guidelines for multicultural competency? The lack of research on supervising cases of religious trauma poses a specific challenge in supporting these emerging counselors, particularly when they also engage in religious practices. Ethical and professional guidelines emphasize the appropriate integration of multiculturalism, including spiritual and religious values. It is therefore imperative that counselors are aware of their own beliefs and how this influences their approach within counseling and supervisory relationships. The goal of this session is to increase dialogue about component-based supervision as an effective technique for emerging counselors who are navigating the intersection of personal values, ethical requirements, multicultural sensitivity, and burnout. The presenter aims to empower supervisors to use a person-centered, strength-based, collaborative approach to supervision in providing a safe, supportive, non-judgemental environment to discuss ethical challenges, reduce supervisee burnout, and improve counseling outcomes.

Presented by: Nicole Taylor

Organizing & Advocating: Creating a Queer Coalition at Your University

Session ID: 186

It is common for queer identified educators to experience burnout, internalized shame, discrimination, tokenism, microaggressions, discouragement from queer scholarship, and resistance from students (Gess et al., 2018). But how do we address these inequalities in a University system? This session will discuss tools to create a LGBTQ+ Coalition at your school to help support systems level advocacy for queer equity and scholarship. By attending this session, we hope that you are able to gain resources and network to organize LGBTQ+ efforts at your University.

Presented by: Peighton Corley & Jill Kivikoski

Research as a Tool for LGBTGEQIAP+ Advocacy

Session ID: 301

Advocacy is most effective when it is data-driven, yet counseling researchers do not always consider their scholarship to be a tool to support social change. In this session, you will learn how LGBTGEQIAP+ scholarship can be a tool for advocacy and how to engage in research as a counselor-advocate-scholar! Come learn strategies for designing, implementing, and using research as a tool for advocacy and policy change.

Presented by: Jordan B. Westcott, Whitney A. Akers, Devyn Savitsky, Michelle Dunn, Christy Oaks, Amber Pope, & Zori A. Paul, on behalf of the SAIGE Research & Scholarship Committee

Steps to Building an Affirming Practice for LGBTGEQIAP+ Folx

Session ID: 302

This session aims to equip counselors with essential knowledge and skills for providing gender and queer-affirming care. Participants will learn LGBTGEQIAP+ inclusive language and the critical role of using correct pronouns in a therapeutic context. Additionally, this session will serve as an introduction to SAIGE's Rainbow Certification program.

Presented by: Brook A. Fulton-DeLong, Jordan B. Westcott, Kate Johnson, & Ana Guadalupe Reyes, on behalf of the SAIGE Education Committee

Enacting Transformational Leadership to Create Policy Change: A Policy and Legislative Advocacy Workshop for Counseling Change Agents

Session ID: 303

The roles of LGBTQ+ advocates and allies are ever-changing and inherently political. The last three years have had the highest number of anti-LGBTQ+ bills proposed and passed in American history. The rights of queer and trans people are under attack at every legislative and judicial level, making the need for policy work and legislative advocacy by counselors necessary to support LGBTQ+ clients and fulfill our ethical code. Doing so requires knowledge and skills connected to the legislative process, political maneuvering, community organizing, and leadership strategies rarely taught in counseling programs. This workshop seeks to address this educational gap and will include information on current LGBTQ+ political issues, resources for community needs assessments, and leadership strategies for advocacy by individuals who have successfully done this work on community, state, and national levels.

Presented by: Gene Dockery, Frank Gorritz FitzSimons, Joe Charette, & Leo Khan-Snyder, on behalf of the SAIGE Public Policy Committee

Conference Schedule

Conference At-A-Glance

TIME	SALONS A-D	VAIL	BEAVER CREEK	SALON HALLWAY
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3RD				
5:00 pm – 7:00 pm				Registration
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4TH				
7:45 am				Registration
8:00 am	Welcome & Breakfast			
9:00 am	Education Sessions			
10:00 am	Education Sessions			
11:00 am		Education Sessions		
12:00 pm	Lunch* & Keynote			
1:00 pm		QTPOC Meeting		
2:00 pm	Education Sessions			
3:00 pm	Education Sessions			2:30 pm – 3:30 pm: Coffee & Snacks
4:00 pm	Education Sessions			
6:00 pm	Opening Reception (Monarch Room)			
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5TH				
7:45 am				Registration
8:00 am	Breakfast			
9:00 am	Roundtable Sessions	Education Sessions		
10:00 am	Poster Sessions	Education Sessions		
11:00 am		Education Sessions		
12:00 pm	Lunch* & State Branches/ Membership Meeting			
1:00 pm		Grad. Student Meeting	Education Session	
2:00 pm	Education Sessions			
3:00 pm	Education Sessions			2:30 pm – 3:30 pm: Coffee & Snacks
4:00 pm	Special Education Session			
*access to lunch runs from 11:45 am – 1:15 pm				

Conference Agenda: Friday, October 4th

8:00 am – 8:50 am

Breakfast & Welcome

Salons A – D, Main Floor

9:00 am – 9:50 am

Education Sessions

Beyond Our Lens: Centering Queer Womxn of Color's Healing Experiences as a Form of Advocacy

Session ID: 1A

Salons A – D, Main Floor

Research is traditionally extractive and perpetuates forces of colonization and other forms of structural oppression. In addition, existing literature on queer and Black Indigenous People of Color communities lacks disaggregated data on intersectional identities and typically uses a deficit-based lens. Thus, this interactive session discusses how researchers and counselors can use research to elevate their advocacy work with lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer or questioning, intersex, ace, and other related identities by being committed to ever-expanding, learning, and growing (LGBTQIA+) communities of color. We will provide participants with an overview of a photovoice project to illustrate how to create mutual partnerships with LGBTQIA+ communities of color while engaging in advocacy. In addition, we will share research results from the photovoice project that counselors and researchers can consider when working with queer womxn of color in counseling.

Presented by: Ana Guadalupe Reyes, Michelle A. Pollok, Sarah Bryant, Jessi Pham & Grace Schroeder

Shining a Spotlight: A Practical Guide Toward Mentorship to Support LGBTQIA+ Counselors-in-Training

Session ID: 1B

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Mentorship is essential in the personal and professional identity development of master's level counselors-in-training (CITs). This session aims to enhance counselor educator and supervisor mentorship practices that are ethically and culturally sensitive to LGBTQIA+ CITs (mentees). Participants will be able to describe risk factors and challenges LGBTQIA+ CITs face within their professional development, especially within their education journeys and counseling practices. This session will discuss the ethical standards counselor educators and supervisors must practice regarding LGBTQIA+ CITs. The presenters will shine a spotlight on culturally sensitive mentorship practices through interactive case vignettes. By the end of this interactive session, participants will be able to apply culturally sensitive mentorship practices within their own settings.

Presented by: Sandra Gavin & Kelsey Scanlan

Advocacy with Queer Parents with Child in K-3 Settings

Session ID: 1C

Beaver Creek Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Parental involvement in early childhood school experiences significantly contributes to a child's educational attainment and well-being. However, heteronormative culture and anti-LGBTQ+ legislation may create social barriers against same-sex parents and their children that strain the efforts of these parents' involvement in their child's school. With existing literature mainly focusing on LGBTQ+ parenting and the well-being of their children, more work is needed to investigate the experiences of LGBTQ parents in terms of school involvement, particularly how their sexual orientation influences their school involvement. Thus, the purpose of our current study is to explore queer parents' perception of and experience with school climate and inclusivity for their overall sense of belonging and involvement. The findings will offer insights into collaborative advocacy among school, mental health, and marriage and family counselors. In this educational session, we will present a synthesis of research on queer parents' experiences in the school system and analyses of our preliminary findings under the framework of interpretative phenomenological analysis and minority stress theory. Implications will be provided for counselors in various settings working with queer parents and their families, especially on strength and resilience building as well as advocacy for inclusion and equity. Future research recommendations will also be presented for further exploration and/or investigation of queer family issues that can inform counseling practice and advocacy. Finally, we will address the questions arising from the audience at the end of the presentation.

Presented by: Jiale Man, Emily Kay Anderson, Blake Cunningham, Pei-Yu Lee & Zoltan Wolfe

10:00 am – 10:50 am

Still Here, Still Queer, Still Sexy AF: Sex-Positive Counseling with Older Queer Adults- Pre-Service Counselors Need to Know

Session ID: 1D

Salons A – D, Main Floor

Did you love Grace and Frankie? Do you wish that more of your older clients felt comfortable discussing their needs related to sexual wellness? Do you have a hard time remembering and applying what you were taught in your lifespan class about working with older adults? Are you thinking about all the people who are part of the aging Baby Boomer population and wondering who is going to be there to help them? Do you struggle to have frank and open conversations with older clients about their sexual needs? Would you like to learn more strategies for working with older queer adults on issues related to sex, healthy intimacy, and sexual wellness? We can help you think through strategies to incorporate into your counseling practice that will support older LGBTQGEQAIP2S+ clients' capacities to be liberated from colonization and oppression and feel free to enjoy their sexuality. We will help you learn how to uproot ageism, heterosexism, and cisgenderism when working with older queer adults so that you can engage in effective, decolonized clinical conversations with older queer adult clients about sexual intimacy. Join us for a lively and engaging presentation aimed at increasing skills with older members of the LGBTQGEQAIP2S+ community!

Presented by: Laurie Bonjo, Cody Helgesen & Serghino Walker



Trans Self-Disclosure in CES: Navigating Support and Safety Across Roles

Session ID: 1E

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

As a part of counselor training and development, students are exposed to the concepts of counselor self-disclosure, yet there is often limited guidance on navigating politicized identity disclosure in therapeutic and educational settings. This often leaves CITs uncertain as to how, if, or when to disclose trans experiences with clients, professors, and supervisors, and those who pursue careers as counselor educators and supervisors are often also left with limited guidance and/or support in navigating identity disclosure in educational settings. This session will explore ways counselor educators and supervisors (CES) can support trans-identified clinicians and how trans-identified CES may use their unique positionalities to facilitate empathy development and cultural competence among CITs through the lenses of scholarly research and personal experience. Additionally, trans-identified attendees will be invited to share collective wisdom and facilitate community-building to develop shared resistance strategies.

Presented by: Mickey E. White

Ecological Interventions for Counselors at Christian Colleges and Universities Serving LGBTGEQIAP+ Students

Session ID: 1F

Beaver Creek Meeting Room, 1st Floor

While many lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans/transgender/two-spirit, gender expressive, queer/questioning, intersex, agender/asexual/aromantic, pansexual/pan/polygender, and other related identity (LGBTGEQIAP+) students find purpose and community through their Christian colleges and universities (CCUs), many also experience physical and psychological harm as a result of their minority sexual and/or gender identities that impedes their safety and sense of welcomeness and belonging on campus. On-campus college counseling centers are often seen by students and student affair professionals alike as a safe space for LGBTGEQIAP+ students (Glanzer et al., 2022; Yarhouse et al., 2021). The college counseling literature contains little research and practice-based scholarship to support counselors at CCUs in their work with LGBTGEQIAP+ students. This presentation utilizes an ecological framework to identify points of entry for systemic interventions for counselors at CCUs to utilize with and for LGBTGEQIAP+ students across the micro, meso, exo, and macro levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) of their experience attending CCUs.

Presented by: Michelle August

11:00 am – 11:50 am

Utilizing sex therapy techniques to empower clients to find their voice for self-advocacy

Session ID: 1G

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Learn to self reflect as counselors and professionals on our own internal biases towards sexual, gender, cultural, age, and religious groups, etc. Even those who consider themselves the most accepting and open often hold unconscious biases that can interfere with connection to clients and their willingness to help a client explore their needs, including that sexuality is a part of our lives. We will discuss how through cultural competency and humanistic approaches we can meet clients where they are and explore how to encourage self-advocacy. Advocacy in this presentation will

sound like meeting medical needs, dealing with trauma, finding resources, accepting oneself, evaluating relationships, and identifying ways to find community.

Presented by: Erica Cavill & Dana Kirkpatrick

A Call to Action: Creating Affirming Spaces and Elevating Advocacy for LGBTQ+ Counseling Students

Session ID: 1H

Beaver Creek Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Despite the strides in counselor education research related to LGBTQ+ topics, LGBTQ+ counseling students experience a litany of barriers, specifically microaggressions, tokenism, and silencing, in their academic journeys. To address this concerning conundrum for counselor educators and counselors-in-training, the presenters highlight limitations of current literature, trends in empirical research, and models that demonstrate actionable advocacy frameworks on an institutional level. To facilitate dialogue and application with the audience, the presenters will utilize case vignettes and interactive discussions to co-create detailed actionable items with participants that can be practiced professionally. The program will close with social justice and advocacy resources.

Presented by: Christine McAllister, Youn Jung Ho & Christian Chan

11:45 am – 1:15 pm

Lunch & Keynote

Session ID: 101

Salons A – D, Main Floor

Lunch will be served from 11:45 am until 1:15 pm. The Conference Keynote, Dr. Jax Gonzalez, Political Director at One Colorado, will begin speaking at approximately 12:00 pm.

1:00 pm – 1:50 pm

QTPOC Meeting

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Description: Join your hosts in this space as an opportunity for QTPOC attendees to connect, express themselves, and engage in dialogue critical to SAIGE's mission.

Hosted by Sheldon Aaron, Emerging Leaders Co-Chair & Mariangelly Sierra, Board Trustee, Multicultural & Social Justice Concerns

2:00 pm – 2:50 pm

Education Sessions

Trans Affirmative Substance Use Disorder Counseling

Session ID: 1J

Salons A – D, Main Floor

With higher rates of substance use and related mental health concerns among transgender and gender diverse (TGD) individuals, counselors have an important role to meet this need both within and outside of clinical settings. Understanding the unique contributors to minority and multiple minority stress, often rooted in systemic forces that affect economic and social positionality, counselors may better align with their TGD clients as they use adapted and emerging evidence-based practices proven effective in treating substance use disorder and maintaining recovery. In this session, participants will examine the factors affecting substance use among TGD persons, as well as recommended strategies for optimal client outcomes.

Presented by: Michael Brubaker, Michelle E. August & Michael P. Chaney

Disenfranchised Grief and Psychosocial Loss Among Bisexual Identifying Adults

Session ID: 1K

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Rates of suicidality are high among the queer community, and bisexual identifications hold even higher risks (Horwitz et. al, 2020; Mereish et. al, 2017). Although much scholarship is dedicated to early intervention to combat the risks posed within queer youth (Rimes et. al, 2019), suicidality is non-linear in nature (Meyer et. al, 2014) with an increased risk among bisexuals and bisexuals identities that do not demonstrate security within their sexual identifications (Campbell et. al, 2019; Meyer et. al, 2019). Further isolation, shame, and guilt can result in an increase of experiencing disenfranchised grief of psychosocial loss among bisexual identifications (Lucas et. al, 2022). Through recognition of the stigmatization, marginalization, and isolation experienced that may result in development of disenfranchised grief, guilt, and shame within the bisexual population this presentation will offer group therapeutic structures and sexual identity development instrumentations to prevent or reduce suicidality in bisexual identifying adults (de Barros et. al, 2023; Ferlatte et. al, 2018; Worthington et. al, 2008).

Presented by: Elizabeth C. Mattia

3:00 pm – 3:50 pm

Don't Yuck My Yum! Exploring Poly/BDSM/Kink Lifestyles

Session ID: 1M

Salons A – D, Main Floor

Sexual and relational expression comes in a variety of packages; however, negative perceptions of nontraditional relationships and sexual practices has contributed to stigmatization, bias, and discrimination towards those who participate or are involved in these communities and lifestyles. This program seeks to explore and educate counselors and educators on non-monogamous

relationship styles and models, while also providing information to counter some of the many misconceptions about BDSM and kink. Attendees will learn more about the principles that represent the kink community's core values and beliefs while increasing their own awareness of ethics and competence when working with clients who live in nontraditional relationships and/or use BDSM and kink in their sexual practices.

Presented by: Heather Deschaine & Ami Crowley

Interwoven: A Study of Longevity in Interracial Gay Male Couples

Session ID: 1N

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

This program centers the outcomes of two research studies of longevity for same-gender loving (SGL) male-identified couples. While there is some literature around love and longevity in couples work, little is known about longevity for men of color and especially men of color in interracial relationships. To help understand longevity from multiple angles, this team shares the stories and experiences of SGL male-identified couples to help counselors and helping professionals understand the contributions to relationship longevity. Understanding these themes can help us all to plan, support, and advocate for healthier, happier, and more resilient relationships for our SGL clients of color

Presented by: Marlon Johnson, Shanta Pamphile, Joe Charette, Alfonso Ferguson & Daton Haywood

4:00 pm – 4:50 pm

Empowering the LGBTGEQIAP+ Community through Resilience and Thriving

Session ID: 1P

Salons A – D, Main Floor

This session aims to explore the crucial intersection of advocacy and strengths-based approaches that focus on resilience and thriving within the LGBTGEQIAP+ community. Participants will engage in a comprehensive review of existing literature to gain insight into the unique challenges faced by LGBTGEQIAP+ individuals and the profound impact of these challenges on mental health. The session will spotlight potential theoretical frameworks that can enhance understanding of resilience and thriving in the LGBTGEQIAP+ community, emphasizing their role in advocacy initiatives and clinical work. By examining these frameworks, participants will be equipped with valuable insights to inform their counseling practices and advocacy endeavors. Practical strategies for fostering resilience and promoting thriving among LGBTGEQIAP+ clients will be discussed, ensuring that attendees leave with tangible tools to advocate for and support the well-being of the LGBTGEQIAP+ community.

Presented by: Deb Crawford

Aging with Pride: Implications for Counselors as Medicare Providers

Session ID: 1Q

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Older adults are the fastest growing proportion of the U.S. population, and 1.8%-3.4% of older people identify as LGBTQ+. Although counseling has historically been inaccessible for older adults, Medicare reimbursement for licensed counselors opens new opportunities to work with older clients, including LGBTQ+ older people. However, counselors may not yet be prepared to work with older adult clients. In this session, you will learn about the unique mental health needs and protective factors of LGBTQ+ older adults, as well as strategies to promote positive aging and wellness for this population. Come get ready to embrace exciting new opportunities for the profession!

Presented by: Jordan Westcott & Brittney N. R. Irion

Exploring the Relation of Access to Health Care with Gender Euphoria in Transgender Adults

Session ID: 1R

Beaver Creek Meeting Room, 1st Floor

The program will present findings from a pilot study exploring the relationship between access to healthcare and the experience of gender euphoria in transgender adults. Through a detailed analysis of gathered data, attendees will gain insights into the nuances of gender euphoria and transgender joy, shedding light on the significance in promoting mental well-being within the transgender community. The discussion will extend to the critical role of health insurance coverage and its impact on gender-affirming care, emphasizing the systemic barriers faced by transgender individuals. The program will discuss by highlighting legislative policies that impact accessing healthcare. Furthermore, the program will underscore the counselor's pivotal role in advocacy for transgender clients, focusing on strategies to promote inclusivity, reduce psychopathology, and navigate policy challenges. Attendees will leave equipped with pragmatic knowledge and actionable insights to enhance their support for transgender individuals in therapeutic settings.

Presented by: Lyds Sherman & Eunhui Yoon

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Opening Reception

Monarch Room, Main Floor

Join us for an opportunity to gather with one another for some light refreshments, a cash bar, and the awarding of SAIGE's *Mark Pope Social Justice & Advocacy Award*.

Mark Pope Social Justice & Advocacy Award

Christine A. McAllister, MEd, LPCC, NCC (she/her) is a doctoral student at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in the Department of Counseling and Educational Development. She dedicates counseling services to diverse populations with a special focus on using affirmative therapy with the LGBTQ+ population. She has held various leadership positions at state, local, and national levels in the counseling profession, including previously serving as a 2019 NBCC Minority Fellow and currently serving as a 2024-2025 Chi Sigma Iota International Fellow. Christy is passionate about advocating for wellness and community and has implemented grants that focus on trauma-informed and culturally responsive wellness workshops. Her research and clinical interests include LGBTQ+ advocacy, counseling individuals with chronic illness centered around disability justice, and trauma-informed approaches.



Congratulations!

Conference Agenda: Saturday, October 5th

8:00 am – 8:50 am

Breakfast

Salons A – D, Main Floor

9:00 am – 9:50 am

Education Session

"Where am I gonna be allowed to exist?": The Lived Experience of Transgender Counselor Educators

Session ID: 1L

Beaver Creek Meeting Room, 1st Floor

This presentation will delve into the lived experiences of transgender counselor educators within the field of counselor education. Participants will explore the 5 key themes identified in the study- fear as a stressor (subtheme of isolation), intertwined identities (subtheme of multicultural humility), connection and community, safety, and incongruent institutional experiences- gaining a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of transgender counselor educators as they relate to working in counselor education and academia. Furthermore, participants will be able to identify and explain the specific challenges faced by transgender counselor educators in counselor education and academia. By exploring these challenges in-depth, participants will gain insight into the systemic barriers and personal challenges encountered by transgender faculty members. Finally, the presentation will explore the implications of the study for counselor education. Participants will discuss how the research findings can "Elevate Advocacy" by informing and shaping counselor education programs to be more inclusive, supportive, and affirming of transgender individuals. Participants will be prepared to advocate for systemic changes within counselor education and promote a more equitable and inclusive profession.

Presented by: Kelsey Ward Scanlan

Roundtables

Salons A – D, Main Floor

RT #1: Applying Aspects of Neuroqueer Theory to Systems of Psychotherapy

This presentation on neuroqueer theory delves into the intricate intersections of neurodiversity and LGBTQ+ experiences through a lens of intersectionality, challenging conventional paradigms in psychotherapy. This presentation elucidates the fundamental principles of neuroqueer theory and proposes strategies for its integration into modern psychotherapeutic practice. At its core, neuroqueer theory challenges the pathology paradigm by reframing neurodivergent traits not as

disorders, but as natural variations in cognitive styles. It confronts historical pathologization, reminiscent of the treatment of homosexuality as a mental disorder, and acknowledges the societal barriers imposed upon neurodivergent and LGBTQ+ individuals. The presentation aims to emphasize the importance of recognizing power dynamics within therapeutic relationships and fostering safe spaces for clients to express their gender and sexual identities. It advocates for the use of non-pathologizing language and the adoption of identity-first language to destigmatize neurodivergent individuals. Furthermore, the paper will underscore the significance of psychoeducation in normalizing individual differences and fostering a sense of community among neuroqueer individuals. By educating clients and their families about neurodivergence and queerness, clinicians can promote acceptance and combat social isolation.

Presented by: Cristian Xavier Morillo & Nouriman Ghahary

RT #3: Advocating with/for Trans & Gender Nonbinary Youth: Prioritizing Gender-Affirming Care in a Hostile Environment

Advocacy for trans and gender nonconforming (TGNC) youth clients has always been an essential part of clinical work but with current legislative attacks from state and municipalities, our clients are in dire need of coordination of care, direct medical advocacy, and gaining access to pertinent treatments before these lifesaving modalities are outlawed by state legislatures. In Ohio, a gender-affirming ban for those under the age of 18 years (partnered with a ban on fem trans youth athlete participation) was passed by the state legislature, subsequently vetoed by the governor, and finally his veto was overridden by the statehouse (Ohio.gov.org). This gave gender-affirming mental health clinicians and medical doctors around 20 days between the back & forth at the state level along with another 90 days before the law took effect to get TGNC youth engaged in hormone replacement treatment (HRT) and other necessary services. This program aims to engage clinicians, supervisors, and educators in how to implement a fast-track process to counter dangerous legislation being promoted in statehouses across the nation, both in conceptualizing responses before legislation passes and preparing our clients for its potential enactment.

Presented by: Peter Finnerty

RT #4: TxSAIGE Presents: The State of Affairs in Texas; A Discussion on Legislative Attacks on the LGBTGEQIAP+ Community

Gender affirming mental and physical healthcare has actively and intentionally been under attack in countless school districts, cities, and states across the country in recent years. Join leadership from TxSAIGE for a roundtable discussion on current events in Texas, including varied legislative efforts such as directives from the Governor and Attorney General, and new bills signed into law, that serve to delegitimize and even criminalize gender affirming care. Session attendees will make connections with leaders and activists from other states, and learn to identify stakeholders and organizations in their own states for further connection and advocacy work. Participants will also learn how to identify and contact their own legislative representatives, what types of legislative action are most important to recognize and track (such as bills targeting gender affirming care), and develop effective scripts to use when advocating for the community at the legislative level. Together we will develop and refine specific action plans to implement in legislative advocacy work. Finally, space will be held for processing current events, as well as emphasizing the importance of

prioritizing self care while engaging in the difficult and exhausting advocating for a community that you both serve professionally and connect to personally.

Presented by: Elizabeth Owens, Marlon C. Johnson, & Michael Lesher

RT #5: Beyond Food: Exploring Eating Related Behaviors throughout the Gender Identity Journey of Transgender Males

This roundtable session explores how transgender adult males have navigated the development of their eating behaviors throughout their gender identity trajectory. While recent research has focused on gender identity development and protective factors of the transgender community, this study explored and examined elements regarding the eating related behaviors of transgender males. A study in which interviews were conducted with six participants within the United States during semi structured virtual sessions will be discussed.

Presented by: Polett Coss

RT #6: Advocacy and Support for Adolescents Identifying as LGBTQ+ Upon Returning to School Post Covid Stay-at-home Orders

In this roundtable discussion we will explore the results from my research, the applicability of the results at the time the study was conducted, and the applicability now. While schools are no longer shuttered due to a global pandemic, we live in an ever changing socio political landscape related to LGBTQ+ legislation, with trans and gender nonconforming people at the center of hate, judgment, and mistreatment. States, school boards, and other governing bodies continue to make the job of advocating for all students even more difficult for school counselors. While the focus of my research is adolescents and school counselors in K-12 education, the data from this research may be applied in a more global context, outside of the school setting and beyond the adolescent stage of development. School counselors are a unique group, having one foot in counseling and the other in education. This research may be used to inform graduate programs and professional organizations in their training of these school counseling professionals. We see more and more difficulty navigating licensure and professional ethics as they counter the anti-trans legislation peppering our country. In addition to school counselors engaging in these conversations, other educational and counseling professionals may gain insight which helps school administrators create a safer, more caring, and more inclusive school environment for all students. Counseling supervisors could assist counselors in training in advocating for at-risk groups, such as LGBTQ+ adolescents. This research provides increased information about meeting LGBTQ+ student needs in schools from all stakeholders.

Presented by: Sarah Johansson

RT #7: Rainbow Connect: Reflections of LGBTGEQIAP+ Student Advocacy Within a K-12 School Utilizing a Multitiered System of Supports

With over 800 anti-LGBTQ+ bills introduced over the past year, LGBTQIAP+ youth continue to face institutional and societal oppression, marginalization, and hostility (GLSEN, 2024). Utilizing the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) multitiered system of supports (MTSS), school counselors are uniquely positioned to implement LGBTGEQIAP+ advocacy initiatives that affirm and celebrate identities and meet the needs of LGBTGEQIAP+ students in K-12 schools. Given the current social climate, advocacy with and on behalf of LGBTGEQIAP+ students is imperative. This

roundtable is intended to be a collaborative sharing and learning space for school counselors, school counselors-in-training, and counselor educators. The facilitator of this roundtable will share their professional experiences with planning and implementing LGBTGEQIAP+ advocacy initiatives within their school district through the utilization of a multitiered system of support (MTSS). This roundtable will facilitate discourse on outcomes, feedback, and future LGBTGEQIAP+ student advocacy initiatives within various school systems.

Presented by: Nicole Christian

RT #8: Nurturing Deviance: Queer Theory in Counselor Education by Learning in a Circle

This session considers the implications of introducing concepts from queer theory to counselors-in-training/doctoral CES students. Without a thoughtful, thorough examination of hetero-/homo-/cis-/mono- normative assumptions surrounding mental health and well-being, counselors risk perpetuating harm when working with marginalized clients who identify as queer or any number of intersecting identities that are seen as deviations from prevailing socio-cultural norms. Participants will gain an understanding of literature formulating what it might mean to "queer" counselor identity in the domains of clinical practice, leadership and advocacy, research, clinical supervision, and teaching. Participants will learn about the learning circle teaching model as an effective tool in line with queer theoretical concepts. The learning circle de-centralizes decision-making/agenda setting, cultivating a communal approach for directing and shaping the experience of participants. The learning circle facilitates another way of knowing, eschewing a hierarchal teaching/learning format. Instead, the participants of the circle create a space for collective understanding to emerge from the multiple perspectives provided by group members. The learning circle format will also be shown as a way for cultivating leadership development opportunities to master's-level counselors-in-training and much needed peer to peer support between queer and queer-allied students.

Presented by: David Thompson

10:00 am – 10:50 am

Education Sessions

Queer Family Forming: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Cisgender Women in Same-Sex Relationships Experiencing Fertility Challenges

Session ID: 2C

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

While reproduction is recognized as an instinct inherent to all living organisms (Hocaoglu, 2018), prior to the development of fertility treatment methods, societal perceptions often labeled sexual minorities in same-sex relationships as socially infertile (Barnett, 2006). This presentation showcases findings from an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis exploring the lived experiences of sexual minorities in same-sex relationships at time of fertility treatment and facing impaired fertility functioning. Through research design and implementation, the study focused on the convergence of mental health and reproductive health, societal stigmas, internalized discrimination, intersectionality of marginalization, potential obstacles, and strengths. The

participants included ten sexual minority cisgender females. Following the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis described by Smith et al., (2009), interviews were transcribed and examined, and initial emergent themes were identified within individual experiences. Data analysis then explored across participant experiences to form superordinate themes describing the essence of the experience. Four superordinate themes were formed with ten subthemes. Three of these subthemes are divided into seven additional supporting themes. The four major themes include: Marriage Equality and Family Formation, Family Formation and Fertility Impairment Impacting the Personal, Experiences of Heteronorming and Cisgendering Reproductive Health, and Accessibility. The findings suggest implications for practicing counselors, counselor educators, and supervisors.

Presented by: Melissa Shiplett-Juue

Session ID: 2D

Beaver Creek Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Responding with Cultural Humility and Advocacy for LGBTQ+ Persons with Disabilities

This transformative presentation will explore the complex realities faced by individuals who navigate the intersection of LGBTGEQIAP+ identities and disability. Through a combination of research insights, personal narratives, and practical advocacy strategies, we aim to enhance awareness and foster collaboration among counselors, educators, and advocates. Together, we will explore ways to integrate effective advocacy for and with these non-dominant populations in our professional practice and beyond.

Presented by: Clark D. Ausloos, Jose Tapia, & Ross Spears

Poster Sessions

Salons A – D, Main Floor

PR #1: Support Groups for Affirming, Cisgender Parents of Transgender Youth: A Systematic Literature Review

Affirming cisgender parents of transgender youth influence their child's quality of life and mental well-being. However, supporting transgender children can lead to negative mental health outcomes among parents due to secondary minority stressors. Affirming support groups can help parents mitigate secondary minority stressors by providing community building, normalcy in safe spaces, and affirming education and resources. This systematic literature review outlines themes surrounding support groups for affirming parents of transgender youth from 18 peer-reviewed studies and book chapters. The following themes appeared in the literature: ambiguous loss and grief, isolation, familial social transition, psychoeducation and resources, focus on youth but not the parent, and advocacy. The synthesis of themes and limitations suggests opportunities for more culturally sensitive support groups, future support group design and evaluations, and capturing racially, age-related, and SES diverse perspectives to inform affirming interventions. Future research, teaching, clinical, and policy implications are also provided.

Presented by: Adrienne Sulma

PR #2: Exploring lived experiences of TNG/E individuals' gender identity development and career development in American South

The program will share findings of a qualitative investigation of TNG/E individuals' lived experiences of gender identity development and career development in the states that can be considered politically non-transgender-affirming. Attendees of this program will learn how TNG/E individuals have navigated their internal and external barriers, including cultural and political climates, within their gender identity and career development processes. What counselors need to consider when they meet and support TNG/E individuals in career counseling will be further explored. The roles and responsibilities of counselors and counselor educators will also be discussed.

Presented by: Eunhui Yoon, Lyds Sherman, Sarah LaJoie, & Timothy Barbara

PR #3: Bisexual Women in Heterosexual Relationships: Highlighting Distinctiveness over Identity Erasure

While a 2022 Gallup poll indicated that 7.1% of Americans identify as part of the LGBTGEQIAP+ community, newer generations are seeing increases in the number of individuals that specifically identify as bisexual (Jones, 2022b). Within this group, women make up over half of Americans who identify with this sexual identity (Jones, 2022b). Researchers have highlighted unique considerations of such individuals, especially when they are in heterosexual presenting relationships. Bisexual women in relationships with men experienced lower levels of outness (Tasker & Delvoye, 2018; Xavier Hall et al., 2021) than those in a relationship with a woman, and may feel pressure to present as heterosexual (Boccone, 2016). While presenting as heterosexual may reduce the discrimination experienced by these women (Goldberg et al., 2018; Xavier Hall et al., 2021), it could also increase experiences of identity erasure (Boccone, 2016; Crofford, 2018; Serpe et al., 2020; Xavier Hall et al., 2021). Some women reported that their heterosexual relationship removed or reduced their ability to disclose their sexual identity (Goldberg et al., 2018). This is on top of other possible mental health concerns, as bisexual women in relationships with men are at increased risk of experiencing depressive symptoms and high levels of stress (Vencill et al., 2018; Xavier Hall et al., 2021). Despite the growing nature of this group's social concerns and mental health considerations, research focusing specifically on bisexual women is limited, and the research is even more limited when looking at bisexual women in heterosexual relationships. This facet of being overlooked can further lead to identity erasure and concerns experienced by this population. Therefore, it is crucial for counselors and other mental health professionals to increase their understanding of these women's experiences. This poster presentation will focus on exploring the identity of bisexual women currently in long-term heterosexual relationships.

Presented by: Rob McKinney, Madeleine Robson, Eli Lenig, & Jane Livingston

PR #4: Impact of Florida Legislation on LGBTQ+ Students

Florida legislation has been at the forefront of anti-LGBTQ+ initiatives nationwide. This phenomenon has been evaluated using interpretive phenomenological analysis focused on the experiences of LGBTQ+ high school students. Inclusion criteria for participants included having attended public school in Central Florida in the year 2022-2023 or 2023-2024 while currently being 18+. Participants made meaning of their experiences, which was then analyzed in the context of minority stress theory. This presentation will be based on a description of the research process and

methodology with focus on how students have made meaning of their experiences, implications, and an overview of where the concept may benefit from further research.

Presented by: Heather Summers

PR #5: Feeling the Tension: Couple-Level Minority Stress & Sexual Satisfaction in Queer Romantic Partnerships

There has been limited empirical research exploring the effects of minority stress on queer people of color (QPOC). Even less research has been conducted on how minority stress at the couple-level can affect QPOC in romantic partnerships. Queer people of color are often forced to navigate stigma, discrimination, impaired social support, and an increased risk of violence related to the visibility of their sexual and racial/ethnic identities (Balsam et al., 2011). Having to cope with these daily stressors may negatively impact the quality of romantic and sexual partnerships, lessening the ability to deepen intimacy and prioritize the needs of the partnership. The present work aims to examine these potential associations between couple-level minority stress (CLMS) and sexual satisfaction for QPOC in romantic partnerships, including how ethnosexual identity may act as a moderator in these associations. Participants were recruited through a previous research study investigating CLMS in QPOC in interethnic relationships with white partners (Sinha, 2023). The participants (n = 201) spanned several minoritized racial, sexual, and gender identities and were also geographically representative. All participants identified as either lesbian, gay, plurisexual, or asexual and as racial minorities. Participants completed the Couple-Level Minority Stress Scale (Neilands et al., 2020), the New Sexual Satisfaction Scale (Štulhofer et al., 2010) and the Queer People of Color Identity Affirmation Scale (QPIAS; Ghabrial & Andersen, 2021).

Presented by: Shane Trujillo, Chloe Rogers, & Jillene Chio

PR #6: Elevating Gender Affirming Care: A Systems Approach in a Hospital Setting

Children's Hospital Colorado (CHCO) serves children, youth, and families of the Rocky Mountain region amidst political battles regarding gender affirming care nationwide. We are a team of healthcare professionals and advocates for transgender and gender diverse children and youth, working together to expand gender affirming mental healthcare services for this vulnerable group. Our poster presentation focuses on advocacy through the Pediatric Mental Health Institute (PMHI) at CHCO, which is the largest hub for mental health services at CHCO, aiming to reach beyond direct mental health services, with a plan that has a far-reaching impact and encompasses more aspects of one's gender journey. We suggest that such a plan must be rooted in competency of gender diversity and cultural sensitivity while cutting across family based clinical services, training and education, community involvement, advocacy, and research, so children and youth can grow to lead happy and healthy lives.

Presented by: Lori Cox-Buday, Mary Kay Meintzer, & Marissa Nunes-Moreno

PR #8: The Association of Tabletop Roleplaying Games (TTRGS) on Gender Dysphoria in TGNC Adults

Research has shown that transgender and non-binary (TGNC) adults often experience gender dysphoria at clinically impairing (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) and subclinical levels (Galupo et al., 2020). However, there is little research on interventions to reduce gender dysphoria, especially in subclinical presentations. Inspired by changes in tabletop role-playing games (TTRPGs) to be more inclusive of queer identities, this study focuses on exploring the gender affirmation that

may be intrinsic to TTRPGs (Sihvonen & Stenros, 2018). The present study compares the experiences of 225 gender-diverse adults. Participants completed a questionnaire consisting of the Gender Congruence and Life Satisfaction Scale (Jones et al., 2019), the Gender Minority Stress and Resilience Measure (Testa et al., 2015), and a 6-item self-report survey to assess TTRPG experience. A correlation analysis assessed the association between amounts of TTRPG gameplay amongst TGNC TTRPG players on transgender resilience (identity pride, community connectedness), Gender Dysphoria, and gender-related mental well-being. Identity pride had a significant negative correlation with TTRPG-reported total hours ($r = -0.158, p < 0.05$), but no other variables were significant. A MANOVA was then conducted to investigate the effects of TTRPG gameplay between non-recent gamers, low-hour (< 100 hours yearly) gamers, and high-hour (> 100 hours yearly) gamers on the variables of interest. As the MANOVA was significant with the combined dependent variables, $F(4, 220) = 5.90, p < .001, \eta = .097$, a post-hoc analysis was then conducted between group means. This analysis indicated that identity pride was significantly greater for gamers with low hours ($M = 21.23$) of gameplay when compared to both non-recent gamers ($M = 18.79$) and gamers with high hours ($M = 18.90$) of gameplay. Additionally, community connectedness among low-hour gamers ($M = 13.60$) was significantly higher than non-recent gamers ($M = 11.73$), but not statistically different from high-hour gamers ($M = 13.01$). These findings indicate that TTRPG gameplay provides a potential benefit for increasing transgender resilience in gender-diverse adults, but these benefits are potentially mitigated with excessive gameplay.

Presented by: Nuu Grenier, Patrik Stastny, Israel Salmeron-Flores, Jan Mohlman, Pei-wen Winnie Ma, & Aileen Torres

PR #9: Queerly Defined Boundaries: Navigating Multiple Relationship Dilemmas as LGBTQ+ Counselors

Even when living and working in large cities, LGBTQ+ counselors who serve their LGBTQ+ community often find that the community feels like a small town. Add in another underrepresented minority identity such as being trans, disabled, or a person of color, and that intersectional community size shrinks even further. Research and guidance on dual relationships abounds for situations such as rural communities or school counseling, but it is often accepted that counselors who practice in large cities can generally avoid dual or multiple relationships with clients. This runs the risk of erasing or overlooking the experiences of counselors in our community who may need support with navigating those situations and ethically serving individuals who share their cultural identities. This session provides the state of research on LGBTQ+ nonsexual dual relationship issues, offers considerations for counselors facing related dilemmas, and explores opportunities for further research questions on nonsexual dual relationships in small intersectional communities.

Presented by: Jillian Rosile

PR #10: Operationalizing Multicultural Competence: Skills and Advocacy Through the Lens of LGBTGEQIAP+ Counseling Trainees

The present program illuminates skills to advocate for multicultural clients within the counseling relationship as described by LGBTQ+ counseling trainees. Twelve LGBTQ+ counseling trainees from CACREP-accredited master's level clinical mental health counseling programs provided qualitative data via semi-structured interview. Questions were developed using tenets of relational-cultural theory. Phenomenological data analysis yielded eight broad themes, each associated with multiple skills endorsed by the trainees. All twelve trainees endorsed the creation of an affirming space and taking accountability as skills when working with multicultural clients. Over half of the trainees endorsed encouragement of solidarity, advocating for social justice, and building community through cultural identity as skills to advocate for clients in the counseling relationship and facilitate understanding of a client's cultural worldview. The data demonstrates that LGBTQ+ counseling trainees possess perspectives that allow for a deeper view of multicultural competence. The lived experiences of LGBTQ+ clinicians provide unique perspectives on advocacy and social justice related to the intersections of their privileged and marginalized identities. Implications for counselors include an increased need to advocate for LGBTQ+ populations in research and practice. The skills outlined in this program demonstrate actions that counselors can take to advocate for their multicultural clients within the counseling relationship. The program demonstrates the need for continued developments in multicultural counseling education and research.

Presented by: Jacob Perez & Ma. Teresa Tuason

PR #11: Gender Equality in Schools: Advocacy Efforts Against Currently Proposed Legislation

Currently proposed legislation at the state level seeks to remove resources from K-12 non-cisgender students and would cause school counselors to choose between conforming to the law or following the requirements of their professional ethics. Literature reveals a history of gender-policing (Perger, 2018), which has and continues to oppress these marginalized students. This proposed legislation will legalize stigmatization and discrimination of non-cisgender students in public and charter school settings, only further threatening their mental health, creating roadblocks for their academic success, and hindering their psychosocial development. These laws would also be in direct conflict with the ACA and ASCA ethical codes and the ethical principles of student autonomy and nonmaleficence. The need for counselors to act to protect these students, increase supports, and foster an environment that promotes their individual development are addressed, and advocacy efforts for counselors and emerging counselors at the individual, community, district, and state level are proposed.

Presented by: Marisa Barzee & Jessica Sparks

PR #12: Supporting LGBTQIA+ Individuals in Private Practice

While there have been many advancements in previous years, LGBTQIA+ individuals are still more likely to experience mental health conditions, including depression and anxiety, at disproportionate rates compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers (Williams Institute, 2021). LGBTQIA+ people are also at a higher risk for suicide attempts due to factors such as discrimination, stigma, and lack of support (National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 2021). Further, LGBTQIA+ individuals are more likely to encounter barriers to accessing health care, with 30% of LGBTQIA+

adults reporting that they have avoided medical care due to discrimination (Williams Institute, 2021). The ongoing mental health concerns and barriers to affirmative care, coupled with the current shifts in the societal and political landscapes, make it vital now more than ever for clinicians to continue expanding their competencies, increasing their knowledge, and identifying advocacy opportunities for and with the LGBTQIA+ communities. This session is designed for counselors, counselor educators and supervisors, and health professionals, providing approaches to improve support for LGBTQIA+ communities through individual reflection, practice-level initiatives, and community advocacy.

Presented by: Nicholas Juzdan, Michelle August & Pei-Yu Lee, on behalf of the SAIGE Emerging Leaders

11:00 am – 11:50 am

Queering Up the Counselor Educator Field: "The Well-Intended Counselor Ally"

Session ID: 2E

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Many counselors report feeling underprepared to work effectively with queer persons (Killian et al., 2019). If counselors-in-training are feeling underprepared to work with members of the LGBTGEQIAP2S+ population, then what could the experience be for a queer identified students learning from faculty who fail to acknowledge who they are in the coursework? As queer doctoral students, we have found that sometimes our queer identities get overlooked, at the stake of homing in or being tunnel visioned into one identity, rather than accepting all of our intersecting identities. Many CES and CMHC programs align with the CACREP Standards to ensure that students are receiving universal training experiences. The way the CACREP Standards address the LGBT population is called into question, as the 2009 and the second draft of the 2016 standards continue to be vague concerning this population (Troutman et al., 2014). It's time for a change. We need representation, mentoring programs, competent counselors for the queer community, and the acknowledgement of privilege within counseling programs to dismantle the systemic oppression on marginalized identities.

Presented by: Emily Hotz, Jason Gorski, Cody Helgesen, & Serginho Walker

Bi-ing into couples therapy: The invisible bisexual in mixed-orientation relationships and the role of couples therapy in stigma reduction

Session ID: 2J

Beaver Creek Meeting Room, 1st Floor

This presentation highlights the impact of minority stress on bisexuals in mixed-orientation relationships, compares recommended methodologies for couples therapy with mixed-orientation partnerships aimed at both prevention and intervention to reduce minority stress, and demonstrates the application of interventions through an interactive case study (Cerqueira-Santos et al., 2021). Over 50% of the LGBT community is composed of bisexual individuals, a population that is markedly and steadily growing (Monto & Neuweiler, 2023; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2023). Bisexual individuals experience higher rates of serious mental illness, substance abuse, and sexually transmitted infections than their lesbian and gay counterparts (Grant, 2023; SAMHSA, 2023). Bisexual individuals in mixed-orientation relationships

(both same-sex and opposite sex) experience mental health challenges as a result of negativity (e.g., bi-erasure) and minority stress (e.g., microaggressions) (Adler & Ben-Ari, 2021; Kwok et al., 2020; Mark et al., 2020). Couples counselors can play a large role in facilitating cultural understanding, increasing sexual satisfaction and functioning, exploring relationship structures (e.g., monogamy, polyamory, etc.), and cultivating relationship values amongst mixed-orientation couples (Nedela et al., 2022; Vencill et al., 2018). In alignment with the SAIGE 2024 conference theme of Elevating Advocacy, this presentation and the interventions described will provide tools for counselors to reduce bi-negativity and stigma in couples counseling practice with mixed-orientation couples.

Presented by: Dana Shimkoski-Savage, Samantha Giedris & Kelly Moylan

11:45 am – 1:15 pm

Lunch & Membership/State Branches Meeting

Salons A – D, Main Floor

Lunch will be served from 11:45 am until 1:15 pm. The Membership & State Branches Meeting will be held during lunch, from approximately 12:15 pm until 1:00 pm. We invite you to join your hosts during this time for an opportunity to engage in discussion about SAIGE and its branches, including emphasis on sharing knowledge across branches, understanding needs of membership and branches, and facilitating connection among SAIGE members!

Hosted by Sandra Gavin, Trustee of Membership and Marlon Johnson, Trustee of State Branches

1:00 pm – 1:50 pm

Graduate Student Meeting

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Description: Join fellow masters and doctoral student attendees for an open discussion and opportunity to network.

Hosted by Brandon Marrerro, Student Trustee

Education Sessions

Understanding Asexuality: Ecological Advocacy Strategies for Counselors and Counselor Educators

Session ID: 2Q

Beaver Creek Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Asexual populations, or Aces, are the least researched sexual identity within our LGBTGEQIAP+ umbrella and also have limited representation in advocacy efforts. The counseling profession focuses primarily on LGBTQ and Ally populations in most programs with little mention of asexual identities. Sexuality is on a broad spectrum of which asexuality is a valid and important part, yet asexual individuals report high levels of depression and anxiety related to being misunderstood within and beyond the LGBTGEQIAP+ communities. This interactive presentation will use Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to better understand persons who identify as asexual. Strategies and resources to assist counselors and counselor educators on how to advocate for Aces and create greater inclusion will be provided.

Presented by: Leslie Kooyman & Wanqi ("Wan Chi") Yang

2:00 pm – 2:50pm

Enacting Transformational Leadership to Create Policy Change: A Policy and Legislative Advocacy Workshop for Counseling Change Agents

Session ID: 2H

Salons A – D, Main Floor

The roles of LGBTQ+ advocates and allies are ever-changing and inherently political. The last three years have had the highest number of anti-LGBTQ+ bills proposed and passed in American history. The rights of queer and trans people are under attack at every legislative and judicial level, making the need for policy work and legislative advocacy by counselors necessary to support LGBTQ+ clients and fulfill our ethical code. Doing so requires knowledge and skills connected to the legislative process, political maneuvering, community organizing, and leadership strategies rarely taught in counseling programs. This workshop seeks to address this educational gap and will include information on current LGBTQ+ political issues, resources for community needs assessments, and leadership strategies for advocacy by individuals who have successfully done this work on community, state, and national levels.

Presented by: Gene Dockery, Frank Gorritz FitzSimons, Joe Charette, & Leo Khan-Snyder, on behalf of the SAIGE Public Policy Committee

Surviving Erasure: Addressing Moral Injury in the LGBTGEQIAP+ Community

Session ID: 2K

Beaver Creek Meeting Room, 1st Floor

This presentation explores the concept of moral injury as it relates to the LGBTGEQIAP+ community. Participants will gain insights into the unique experiences of moral injury within this population, with a particular focus on religious trauma and discrimination. The program will also discuss the impact of recent global and political events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, on the mental health of the LGBTGEQIAP+ community. Mental health

counselors will be equipped with the knowledge and tools to better understand and address these issues, and will be encouraged to advocate for the well-being and equality of the LGBTGEQIAP+ community.

Presented by: Maria G. Giuliana

3:00 pm – 3:50 pm

Coming Out at Midlife: A Guide to Advocacy and Liberatory Counseling

Session ID: 2O

Salons A – D, Main Floor

Coming-out to a straight partner or spouse can be difficult for both individuals (Hernandez et al., 2011). For LGBTQ+ individuals, the stress experienced during the coming-out process is associated with increased risk for depression, suicidal ideation, and feelings of burdensomeness. For individuals coming out later in life they are adapting to both a new cultural identity and the developmental hurdles of middle age (Lemke, 2015). Several considerations influence the decision to leave an established relationship such as children, finances, and career, and are further complicated by beliefs from family, religion, and cultural values (Baams et al., 2015; Fankhanel, 2010). There is a paucity of scholarly research on the process of individuals coming-out after heteronormative marriages. The majority of our knowledge of coming-out after marriage is found through anecdotal data and blog entries. This presentation utilizes findings from a consensual qualitative study that explored the experiences of individuals who came out while engaged in a heteronormative marriage as well as the resources and types of support they utilized. The presenters will discuss findings on experiences of individuals who came out after heteronormative marriage later in life. The presenters will provide a framework to support mixed-orientation couples where one partner comes out.

Presented by: Vanessa Dominguez, Jake Wheatley, & Olivia Listrom

Advocating for our gender expansive clients, colleagues, and loved ones: Navigating providing gender affirming care where trans rights are under attack

Session ID: 2P

Vail Meeting Room, 1st Floor

Gender affirming care, the people who provide it, and the parents who try to access it for their trans kids, are all actively under attack in several states. This session will focus on our coordinated efforts to advocate for the transgender community in Texas state legislature, as well as the lived experiences of providers and clients in Texas. Attendees will come away knowing more about what has and is still happening at the state legislative level in Texas and the chilling effect it has had on our ability to provide appropriate medical and mental health care. Participants will have the benefit of learning from our experiences so that they can gain more knowledge and concrete action steps to be a better advocate for the transgender communities in their own states.

Presented by: Elizabeth Owens

D/s, M/s, O/s, TPE... What do all these letters mean?!: BDSM Power Imbalanced Relationships 101

Session ID: 2N

Beaver Creek Meeting Room, 1st Floor

There is currently a huge gap for helping professionals in understanding the lived experiences of clients who participate in BDSM, in particular those who engage in consensual power imbalanced relationships. Even clinicians who understand enough to avoid making clients do the work of educating them, often bring cis-hetnormative and misinformed views on BDSM into the therapy space. As educators within the BDSM community, and as a student counselor, we hear how those in power imbalanced relationships struggle to feel safe within the therapy space, often fearing judgment, and even worse, harm, at the hands of someone from whom they seek help. In this session, we hope to give mental health professionals a 101 on informed consensual power imbalanced relationships and the ways D/s, M/s, O/s, and power-exchange relationships can infuse the day-to-day life of their clients. We seek to provide guidelines to help therapists begin to unpack what "healthy" looks like within alternative relationships and how to begin to support clients who engage in these dynamics. We hope this will act as a launching point for clinicians to be able to engage with their own education and consider how to foster more openness for clients who may or may not be a part of the BDSM community.

Presented by: Ari Levine

4:00 pm – 4:50 pm

From Competencies to Guidelines: Upcoming Changes from SAIGE Taskforces

Session ID: 2Z

Salons A – D, Main Floor

The original Competencies for Counseling with LGBQQIA Individuals and Competencies for Counseling with Transgender Clients were published in 2013 and 2010, respectively. Join the Taskforce Chairs for a discussion of the current state of updates to the Competencies, which will soon be referred to as Guidelines, and participate in dialogue related to what you would like to see addressed through the upcoming revisions to these documents. Come be a part of informing the future of counseling practice with the LGBTGEQIAP+ community.

Presented by: Rob McKinney, Stacy Pinto, Mickey White, & Whitney Akers

5:30 pm

SAIGE Board Meeting

Location TBA

Acknowledgements



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THANK YOU!

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