

46TH NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON SOCIAL WORK AND HUMAN SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS

# CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES IN RURAL AND SMALL-TOWN INDUSTRIAL COMMUNITIES

(VIRTUALLY) JULY 14–16, 2021

CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
CALIFORNIA, PA

# SCHEDULE

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**CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY**  
OF PENNSYLVANIA

# WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 2021

## 9–10 A.M.

"REVITALIZING AND STRENGTHENING RURAL COMMUNITIES:  
COMMUNITY SYSTEMS NEEDS ASSESSMENT"

DR. EBONY L. LANG

This session shares the results of a quantitative study involving 361 participants that examined the perceived mental, physical and financial aspects of health and quality of life in a rural community. 1 CEU Offered.

## 10–11 A.M.

"A STRATEGY FOR PATIENT–CENTERED CARE AND IMPROVED OUTCOMES  
FOR INTEGRATED BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE IN RURAL AREAS"

SHELLY RICHARDSON, DSW, LICSW

The new healthcare model within the United States focuses on the whole person, looking at these issues (physical and mental health, substance use, etc.) as interrelated. In this workshop a panel of speakers discusses how to cost-effectively provide patient-centered care: better care with better outcomes in rural communities. 1 CEU Offered.

## 11:15 A.M.–12 P.M. OPENING CEREMONIES

PLEDGE, SING THE SONG

SAM HICKMAN, PEG MUNKE AND MIKE DALEY

## 12:30–1:30 P.M. WORKSHOP

"USING TECHNOLOGY—MEDIATED PRACTICES TO ADDRESS CONTEMPORARY MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES DURING A PANDEMIC".

SAMANTHA WOLFE—TAYLOR PH.D. CANDIDATE, MSW, LCSW;  
CHRISTIAN DECK, MSW, LSW; AND JAIMIE L. ARMSTRONG MSW, LCSW

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shortage of mental health professionals in rural communities, social work professionals need to be at the forefront of developing technology-mediated practices to address contemporary mental health challenges in rural communities. This presentation will offer social workers the tools to begin addressing these challenges. 1 CEU Offered.

## 2–3 P.M. WORKSHOP

"REDNECKS, HILLBILLIES, AND HICKS: LET'S STOP BASHING RURAL FOLKS"

MICHAEL R. DALEY, PH.D., LMSW—AP, ACSW;  
PEGGY PITTMAN—MUNKE, PHD

Terms like "redneck," "hillbilly" and "hick" illustrate the systemic discrimination rural people face. This presentation discusses the resulting social and economic costs in the United States. 1 CEU Offered.

## 3:30–4:30 P.M.

"PROVIDING AFFIRMING CARE: ASSISTING LGBTQ+ FOLK LIVING IN RURAL AREAS"

DAVID LOEFFLER MA, MS, NCC AND JOE CHARETTE, MSED, LPC, NCC

LGBTQ+ people living in rural areas face unique challenges, which may include isolation, stigmatization, victimization, discrimination, and barriers to health and social services. This presentation focuses on providing LGBTQ+ affirming care that recognizes these unique challenges and prepares providers to work with LGBTQ+ rural communities, particularly those with limited resources. 1 CEU Offered.



**5-6 P.M.**

**"CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES OF DEEP EAST TEXAS OPIOID"**

**DR. JOSE CARBAJAL AND DR. STEPHEN COOPER**

This session presents research conducted in East Texas related to opioid use disorder; excerpts from participants will be shared regarding hardships and unique barriers they faced.

1 CEU Offered.

**6:30-8:15 P.M.**

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**H. STEPHEN COOPER, PHD, LCSW, LCCA**

Professor and Associate Director of Research  
School of Social Work - Stephen F. Austin State University. 1.5 CEU Offered.

**THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2021**

**10-11 A.M.**

**"RURAL TELE-BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES"**

**BENJAMIN MALCZYK PH.D., MSW AND EMILY FRESKE, MSW STUDENT**

This presentation outlines a research project examining: 1) the prevalence of tele-behavioral health services in the state of Nebraska; 2) approaches to increase the efficacy and frequency of telehealth for individuals in rural areas; and 3) the contextual factors impacting increased utilization of telehealth for mental and behavioral health services. 1 CEU Offered.

## 11:30 A.M.—12:30 P.M. WORKSHOP

### "RURAL STRENGTHS PREVAIL: COVID AS INNOVATOR IN RURAL SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION"

PEGGY PITTMAN—MUNKE, PHD

MICHAEL R. DALEY, PHD, LMSW—AP, ACSW

The pandemic magnified the issues that rural social work programs face, including faculty diversity and geographic distances. Online education was not always ideal, and field work was affected. The can-do rural program response has spurred innovation with implications for the future. 1 CEU Offered.

## 12:45—1:45 P.M.

### "SOCIAL WORK IN A NORTHERN CANADIAN RURAL SCHOOL WITH INDIGENOUS STUDENTS — WHAT WORKS "

DR. RALPH BODOR PHD, RSW AND KRISTINA KOPP MSW, RSW

For Indigenous communities, education has long been a source of ongoing harm and assimilation. Applying a ceremony-based, relationship-centred approach to school-based social work practice with young Indigenous students is vital to create education as healing. This presentation explores "what works" for Indigenous students by sharing the use of Indigenous knowledge-based practices in a Northern Canadian School. 1 CEU Offered.

## 2:15—3:15 P.M.

### "PROGRAMS TO PREPARE EMERGING PROFESSIONALS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES"

JOSHUA CARVER, BSW, MSWC; JENNIFER HARRISON PHD, LMSW, CAADC  
AND HANNAH KENNY BSW, MSWC

Rural communities require highly trained providers and digital tools to increase access. In response, two federally funded interdisciplinary workforce development programs train emerging professionals in behavioral health on digital platforms. Program components and improvements resulted in increased familiarity for social workers in enhancing access and improving outcomes in rural areas. 1 CEU Offered.

## 3:45– 4:45 P.M. WORKSHOP

### "TELLING THE STORIES OF RURAL–INDUSTRIAL NORTHERN APPALACHIA IN SONG"

SUSAN POWERS AND JEFF BERMAN

Susan Powers, is a multidiscipline artist from Western Pennsylvania. Steeped in the history of the region and an expert in the music of the Alleghenies, she writes songs rooted in family folk tales and local history that she connects to larger themes and other stories. Sue Powers' Appalachian inheritance lives in stories and music from her father's family. They performed for square dances and sang sacred music. Her mother's family arrived in northern Appalachia at the beginning of the twentieth century with a wave of Slovak immigrants to work in the coal and coke region of Fayette County Pennsylvania. The use of traditional claw-hammer banjo techniques combined with contemporary song styles and a sense of place influence her songwriting. Susan is also a painter who views her songs as visions. The main message in her songs is that everyone's story is heroic and interesting, a message consonant with social work's emphasis on the dignity and worth of all humans. Jeff Berman, a multi-instrument musician noted for his work with the dulcimer will be joining Susan Powers in this workshop.

## 5–6 P.M.

### "WINDSHIELD TIME: REFLECTIONS FROM HOSPICE SOCIAL WORKERS ON THE BEAUTY, TRIALS AND TRAVELS TO PATIENTS IN RURAL INDIANA" MS. JESSICA CURD, LCSW, ACSW, ACHP–SW AND DR. MICHIN HONG

This phenomenological study explored thoughts, feelings and experiences of rural hospice social workers using qualitative interviews. A total of 19 social workers shared about benefits and challenges of their work, including reflections about the space between visits and their exploration and development of meaning during their grief and practice journeys. 1 CEU Offered.

## 6:15–7 P.M.

BUSINESS MEETING

7-8 P.M.

POETRY/LITERATURE OF THE REGION  
JILL SUNDAY AND NORMA THOMAS

Local authors read and discuss their work.

Optional Regional Activity: WANA Live 8-9 P.M. (Facebook or Youtube)  
Nonaffiliated with Rural Caucus. Local entertainment for your enjoyment.

FRIDAY, JULY 16, 2021

10:15-11:15 A.M.

"ADDRESSING LIMITED SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS FOR PARENTS BY ENGAGING COMMUNITIES."  
JUDY ZIMBELMAN, DSW, CSW-PIP

Resources for families and parents in rural areas are often scarce, impacting the functioning of parents and in turn affecting children themselves. This presentation provides creative solutions to establishing resources for parents in rural areas. Although community organizing is not new to social work, this presentation will identify how creative ideas can create positive change in communities. Additionally, the issue of incorporating community organizing into the social work curriculum will be addressed. Rural social work is not typically a standard inclusion in the social work curriculum. By including rural social work with community organizing in the social work curriculum, students considering work in rural areas can be better equipped. 1 CEU Offered.

11:30 A.M.-12:30 P.M.

GUEST SPEAKER  
BRIAN CHARLTON  
DONORA MUSEUM (KNOWLEDGE NIBBLES)



## 12:45–1:45 P.M. WORKSHOP

### "AWARENESS OF OPPRESSIONS AND PRIVILEGE AMONG BSW STUDENTS"

RACHEL L. WRIGHT, PH.D., MSW; LEAH HAMILTON; TYNECCA LYNCH;  
KEARA NDHLOVU; PETER R. FAWSON AND AMANDA M. PULLEY.

It is imperative that social workers are aware of oppression and privilege prior to practicing with marginalized populations. The proposed session reports the results of surveys distributed to BSW level students enrolled at a PWI in rural Appalachia. Implications and recommendations for curriculum changes will be discussed. 1 CEU Offered.

## 2–3 P.M.

### "WHERE RURAL MEETS URBAN: A VIRTUAL IMMERSION EXPERIENCE FOR BEGINNING MSW STUDENTS"

MARK GEISLER, PH.D., LMSW

This presentation describes the use of virtual urban immersion pedagogy in an Advanced Generalist Practice MSW-level program in a rural area of a Midwestern state. In addition to articulating the philosophy behind and logistics of the experience, the presenter will share anecdotal evaluative data based on student course evaluations. 1 CEU Offered.

## 3:15–4:15 P.M. WORKSHOP

### "THE LAST MILE: COVID–19, TELEHEALTH, AND BROADBAND DISPARITIES IN RURAL INDIANA"

KRISTEN FUNK, MSW, LCSW, LCAC

Increased telehealth during COVID-19 is mostly positive for patients and providers. However, many rural residents cannot use telehealth because they lack infrastructure needed to support broadband access. This evidences a social justice issue and illuminates a challenge for social workers to collaborate and promote broadband access as a right. 1 CEU Offered.



# 4:30–5:30 P.M.

## "IMPACT OF BMMRS ON MENTAL HEALTH AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS"

DR. YOON

With a non-clinical sample of 249 undergraduate students, the results confirm that spiritual variables (Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness/Spirituality: BMMRS) are unique predictors of mental health beyond demographics and personality, as well as a need to consider both positive and negative spiritual beliefs when predicting mental health among college students. 1 CEU Offered.

# 5:45–6:45 P.M.

## "RESHAPING SOCIAL JUSTICE PRACTICE"

DR. JOHN MCNUTT

The Pandemic highlighted major changes in society, including a global information economy and an environmental crisis. Urban and rural paces will experience this differently. This paper considers how the profession can revisit and create new social justice practice theory for the future and proposes a system for developing practice theory. 1 CEU Offered.



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