

2023 RETREAT

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS & BIOS

Building A
Stronger
Tomorrow

Trauma Responsive Ways of Being – An Organizational Approach to Serving Those that Serve

Session Description: In this 90-minute session, Danae Riggs, will facilitate an overview discussion focusing around the 5 Core Convictions of Understanding how Trauma impacts the Brain and Body, the Importance & Practice of Regulation & Growing Resilience, with a primary focus on defining how organizations/agencies can promote a sense of felt safety with oneself, colleagues & outward to the clientele served.

Presenter Bio: C. Danae Riggs – Certified Trauma Specialist, Resilience Worker, and Consultant

Danae brings 20+ years of non-profit experience to her leadership with a purpose-driven focus to love and live in a way that promotes equity, justice, empathy, forgiveness, and wholehearted healing.

Danae has a background in mental health direct services, program development & management, organizational & leadership development, with a key focus on advancing & educating leaders in their own fields through coaching, & the facilitation of continued education & training. Danae is the founder of Humans Being Human Consulting, LLC. and has been serving in the field of Resilience Based, Trauma Responsive Care for 5+ years of late. Danae is a lead consultant with Soul Bird Consulting and Finding Hope Consulting and serves with several projects in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), & Community Supports Incorporated (CSI) in addition to serving youth in the multi-System work with Ohio Job and Family Services (JFS), and additional agencies. Danae also finds humble pride in being a Doula in both birth and death circles and brings her passion for loving humans deeply to all she does as a consultant, a mother, a partner, and a community citizen.

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Social Emotional Learning (SEL) – Building Healthier Youth

Session Description: Social Emotional Learning is definitely a buzzword in schools these days. Research shows that the process by which young people acquire and apply knowledge, skills and attitudes to become more self-aware, navigate emotions, develop empathy, establish healthy relationships, and make constructive choices regarding personal behavior must be intentionally taught through evidence-based instruction in order to achieve positive outcomes. This session will share Talawanda School District's (Oxford, Ohio) experience in assessing student needs, delivering curriculum, and collaborating with the community to build healthy, resilient youth.

Presenter Bio: Amy Macechko, OCPS

Amy has served as the Health & Wellness Coordinator for the Talawanda School District (Oxford, OH) since 2006. Her primary responsibility includes chairing the Health Coordinating Council, which seeks to minimize the non-academic barriers to student learning through policy, practice, and programming efforts. Her work focuses on multiple facets of wellness, specifically drug prevention, mental/social/emotional health, and the promotion of active living and healthy eating. In this position, Amy also serves as Director for the Coalition for a Healthy Community – Oxford Area. She provides administrative support for the community-based organization, including strategic planning, training, grant writing, and evaluation support. In this role, Amy also serves as a liaison between the greater Oxford Area and the District to cultivate partnerships that support health and wellness.

Amy received a BA in Psychology from Miami University and a Master of Arts in Teaching from National-Louis University in Wheaton, Illinois. Prior to this position, Amy taught high school psychology and sociology. She is an Ohio Certified Prevention Specialist.

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Engaging with Marginalized Populations 101

Session Description: In this session, we will build a foundation of understanding of who makes up marginalized populations, how to ethically engage with folx with different identities than yourself, and why this work is beneficial for the self and the communities we belong to.

Presenter Bio: Jess Link

Jess Link is a critical thinker and strategic facilitator for systems change from complex organizational structure to individual behavior. Jess currently works at the University of Cincinnati in CECH Office of Innovation and Community Partnerships and has served as an officer of the Executive Board for CCDFA in Campbell County, KY for six years. Jess is interested in convening groups with enjoyment, treading new partnership pathways, and bolstering ease for marginalized groups. They spent 10 years in program and partnership management for large non-profit and government organizations, including multiple YMCA affiliates, Girl Scouts of Western Ohio, Brighton Center, and the City of Covington. They've developed and supported more than five employee resource groups and advisory boards focused on standard operating procedure and policy change from DEI initiatives to access of scientifically and medically accurate prevention curriculum for teens.

Undercover Prevention

Session Description: Learn how to conduct alcohol compliance checks, how to use data to both prove and disprove the impact of access points in your community, and how to share this information with different sectors using a platform appropriate to the audience. Along the way, we'll discuss working with "Gen Z" compliance inspectors (FYI: 21-year-olds don't ask for receipts).

Presenter Bio: Launi Gum

Launi Gum serves as the Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Program Director of Champions for a Drug-Free Grant County in Grant County, Ky. She entered the field of prevention in 2020 – because there's no better time for a career change than a global pandemic. Prior to COVID19, Launi's background is in Education as an educator in the classroom and most recently, as an Assistant Youth Services Center Coordinator. She has more than 10 years of experience working with youth from Preschool through College across various settings and her passion to equip youth with the ability to break generational cycles motivated her transition into prevention. Launi has two teenagers, so she lives and breathes prevention at work and at home. In her free time, she enjoys reading, yoga, and being in the sun.

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SUD: Beyond Primary Prevention

Session Description: The Jackson County Health Department, Jackson County Anti-Drug Coalition and Jackson County EMS recognized increased levels of overdoses with Heroin mixed with Fentanyl throughout the community beginning in 2018. After years of lowered rates of overdose, the agencies began looking for a way to partner and change the stigma in the community around substance use and deal with the increasing instances of burnout and compassion fatigue among first responders. Applying for and receiving a First Responder CARA grant, these agencies have created and implemented a successful Quick Response Team in Jackson County, West Virginia with an enormous goal to support and change the community.

Presenter Bio: Amy Haskins

Amy Haskins, a native of Virginia, has worked in various areas of community health programming in Northern Virginia and West Virginia for the last 23 years. Amy currently serves as Administrator of the Jackson County Health Department as well as the Director of the Jackson County Anti-Drug Coalition, and co-Director of the Jackson County Quick Response Team. Amy is also a Sanitarian and the Threat Preparedness Coordinator for the Health Department.

Amy began working for the Jackson County Health Department in 2007 as a Public Health Educator and grant writer. In her time with the Health Department, Amy, along with her many community partners, worked with the West Virginia Legislature to ban synthetic drug sales; advocated successfully for regional incinerators throughout West Virginia; and assisted in the development of statewide policies and recommendations on the proper disposal of prescription drugs collected through take back programs. Amy has testified on Capitol Hill several times regarding successful substance use prevention policies in West Virginia. She has also had the opportunity to present on prevention strategies at multiple national conferences and meet with President Trump, President Obama and former United States Secretary of State Hilary Clinton in regards to substance abuse prevention and continued support for funding of the Drug-Free Communities grant.

Amy has been instrumental in bringing federal, state, and local grant funds into the community to assist with services for the uninsured and underinsured citizens of Jackson County. She also assists local organizations in applying for grant funds to support their vision and mission serving the Jackson County community in a multitude of facets.

An avid baseball fan, Amy believes in the words spoken by Roberto Clemente – “Any time you have an opportunity to make a difference in this world and you don’t, then you are wasting your time on Earth.”

Amy holds a Master’s Degree in Health Promotion/Wellness Management from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from George Mason University. She resides in West Virginia with her husband Jeff, her two college-aged sons, and her daughter who is a senior in high school.

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Communities Within Communities – Working with Special Populations

Session Description: In this session, Uplift Irondequoit will share the realities of working with a community within your community, especially when there are significant health disparities to contend with. From the identification of this need through current strategy implementation, there has been a lot to learn from working with the LGBTQ+ community of Rochester and Irondequoit, NY. Vicky and Melissa will outline challenges, successes, and tips for examining the needs of special populations in your own community.

Presenter Bio: Victoria Beatham

Vicky Beatham serves as the Program Director of Uplift Irondequoit in Rochester, NY. In her time with Uplift, she has overseen State Opioid Response as well as Drug-Free Communities projects as well as the operations of the coalition at large. She also played a critical role in receiving and starting up the Special Populations grant project focused on addressing the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in Rochester and Irondequoit. Vicky holds a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in Public Health from the University at Buffalo and has been working in the prevention field for 2 years. Vicky's passion is in building connections with other dedicated individuals to work towards the common goal of a stronger, healthier community for youth.

Presenter Bio: Melissa Safford

Melissa is the Coalition Coordinator for the Special Populations project within Uplift Irondequoit. In this role, her primary focus is to address alcohol and cannabis use which is disproportionately affecting LGBTQ+ youth. While she is relatively new to the world of prevention, Melissa has experience in teaching youth leadership, college health promotion, and LGBTQ+ advocacy. Melissa holds a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in Community Health from SUNY Cortland. She has also been a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) since 2022 and has recently become certified as a SafeZone (LGBTQ+ inclusion) trainer.
