



# The Northwest Catholic Counseling Center

Volume XXIV

Summer 2021

Number 2

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

### Grace in Transition

*Friends,*

*Changes continue to tumble into our lives. As pandemic restrictions ease, I find myself needing to relearn things that once came naturally or leaving behind ways that once seemed important in favor of something totally new. I feel both trepidation and excitement at the same time!*

*We have changes at The Northwest Catholic Counseling Center (NCC), too. In June, we welcomed **Clista Prelle-Tworek**, MS, LPC, CADC III, as our new Clinical Director. She brings many years of mental health experience to NCC and is the perfect person to help navigate this next part of our journey.*

*-Erin Peters, Executive Director*



Greetings Everyone!

I was drawn to NCC when I read about the values and mission of the agency. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are at the forefront of both my personal life and my work as a counselor and supervisor/trainer for other professionals in the field. Respect for each person's unique journey is central to my practice, as is providing support to those in need, regardless of ability to pay. I specialize in PTSD recovery and have had ample opportunities to apply my understanding of working with anxiety, depression and trauma as we have negotiated the changes necessary with the COVID-19 pandemic. A worldwide pandemic brings our vulnerability and need for safety into sharp focus.

As Erin indicated, we are learning how to be ever more flexible and responsive to the changes necessary to help ensure the health and safety of our clients and staff. I am amazed with the effectiveness of the shift to telehealth by NCC, and the counseling profession in general, in order to ensure that we can continue to meet the increasing needs of people dealing not only with issues of health and wellness, but existential realities of our mortality and the ethics of showing up for other human beings. We strive to interact in ways that are compassionate and healthy.

Our next steps are the gradual re-opening of the clinic to more in-person appointments for those people who prefer this modality, while still retaining the telehealth options that are here to stay. We are continuing to grow as an agency and are in the process of hiring two mental health clinicians to help meet the demand in our community. The Levantar Latinx program is launched and poised for growth in the coming year. We are continuing with the Marriage Preparation workshops and sessions and are seeking to expand other workshop offerings in the community. We are hoping to upgrade our electronic health records system to meet the needs of the expanding services.

I am happy to be working collaboratively with a team that practices in day-to-day interactions the same values that the agency as a whole aspires to, when working with our clients and the larger community. I look forward to deepening relationships and seeking ever more creative and effective ways to help all of us negotiate the challenges of our collective journey in the months and years ahead. Thank you for trusting me with this responsibility!

*-Clista Prelle-Tworek, Clinical Director*

Providing Help . . . .

. . . . Creating Hope

## FOUNDERS

Sarah Deeby, OSM, LPC  
Barbara Kennedy, OSM, LPC  
Lisa Sheridan, OSM, LIMHP

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Erin Peters

## CLINICAL DIRECTOR

Clista Prelle-Tworek, MS, LPC,  
CADC III, QMHP

## CLINICAL STAFF

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Andrea Aragon, LPC  
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Lacie Baumer, Graduate Intern  
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Shirley Price, LPC  
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## OFFICE MANAGER

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Stephanie Avery

## OFFICE ASSISTANT

Dinorah Alvarenga

## OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

Vickie Carl  
Nancy Fredricks  
Mary Hill



## OFFICE HOURS

9:00am – 5:00pm

*Evening and Saturday  
appointments available*

[nwcounseling.org](http://nwcounseling.org)

## Meet Our New Staff!

### Clista Prelle-Tworek, MS, LPC, CADC III, QMHP

Clista has worked in the field of mental health for over 20 years, working primarily with clients who have co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, with a special emphasis on trauma recovery. She has experience in a wide range of settings, including secure residential treatment and supervision, residential and outpatient substance use treatment, outpatient mental health clinical experience and supervision.



### Stephanie Avery

Stephanie is NCC's Development Associate and is pursuing her Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Bringing over seven years of nonprofit experience, she enjoys developing impactful mental health content, collaborating with local leaders, and coordinating special events. She has a passion for mental health advocacy and seeks to create positive change by cultivating hope and healing in the community.



## We Are Hiring! Therapists Wanted!

NCC is hiring full-time and part-time licensed mental health therapists (LPC, LMFT, LCSW), and would also consider those close to licensure. Flexible scheduling, great benefits, and regular clinical supervision and educational opportunities are just some of the perks! Learn more at [nwcounseling.org/job-openings](http://nwcounseling.org/job-openings)

## Reopening at Your Own Pace

At NCC we are grateful to begin a new phase of reopening to our clients and community. Clients who are vaccinated will now have the option to make in-person appointments, and though masks will still be worn during sessions, it is a welcome change for many of those who use our services and are fatigued by living life online.

However, even positive change comes with stress. It is not only our community that is slowly opening up but also ourselves, each at our own pace. For sixteen months, we lived in a restricted lifestyle that few of us could have possibly imagined pre-pandemic. While coming out of the storm is certainly easier than diving into it, the experience of the storm still leaves its mark on our lives, and each of us will face unique needs as we heal and rebuild.

**Here are some tips on navigating this transitional moment:**

- **Embrace your own journey.** We are all moving at a different pace when it comes to diving back into social experiences. Whether fast, slow, or somewhere in between, move at the pace that is right for you.
- **Communicate your needs.** Whether at the work place or with your friends, express feelings and concerns that may come up related to pandemic transitions. Remember that it is ok to say no.
- **Be patient with yourself.** While there were many devastating aspects of the pandemic, some people found themselves flourishing in the resulting stillness, having an easier time maintaining sobriety, or feeling release from long held body-image issues and pressures. Know that it's ok to feel unsettled as life changes once again. Talk with your support network or with a counselor to find ways to maintain any healthy habits that were established during quarantine and social distancing.
- **Examine personal change.** All of us have changed as a result of the pandemic. Examining those changes, good or ill, can help us reassess who we are, what we value, and how we want to move forward. Seeking out counseling is a great way to aid ourselves in this important process.
- **Reestablish a routine.** Building a simple foundation can help us during times of change. Commit to a routine that serves and grounds you while you navigate new aspects of life.
- **Know that you aren't alone.** While it can sometimes feel like we are the only ones feeling anxious, particularly about things that on the surface seem so positive, there are many people wondering how and when to move forward given all that has occurred over the last year. If you need help, NCC is here for you!



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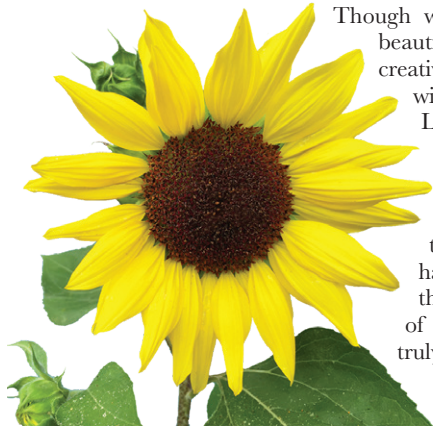
### Client Story: Two Perspectives

Jason started his counseling sessions in person at NCC before the pandemic began. As he found himself pivoting to virtual services, he felt that it was difficult to really connect with people on the other side of the screen. As his life began to feel like one long Zoom meeting, the therapeutic experience faded into the background. For Jason, coming back to in-person counseling has been a renewing and refreshing experience. For him, it served as a reminder of what therapy could be: a source of connection and healing.

Sarah was resistant to doing online counseling sessions. However, once she got started, she ended up enjoying them far more than her in-person experiences. She could meet at a time that was convenient for her and get access to care which was once a barrier due to living in a rural area. For her, the therapeutic experience was even more personal as she could speak to a professional, diving into deep thoughts and feelings, while also being in the safety and comfort of her own home. If she did have an emotional session, she did not have to worry about a distressing commute. Instead, she could make herself a cup of tea and process her feelings from her own warm couch.

# Growing Hope 2021 Results

In conjunction with Mental Health Month, NCC hosted a spring virtual fundraising event, Growing Hope, to spark inspiration, tell impactful mental health stories, and share about client services available through the Center. On May 4th the community came together to support mental health, raising \$42,216 for clients who are in need of care but are uninsured or underinsured.



Though we missed having the Block Party of former years, NCC pivoted beautifully into the virtual realm, utilizing Executive Director Erin Peter's creative talent from her years in television to provide dynamic content, along with guest appearances by founder Sr. Sarah Deeby, supporter Anne-Louise Sterry, therapists Jeremy Richardson and Michelle Sideroff, and former clients Tia Sherry and Karen Taylor.

Growing Hope truly culminated a year in which staff, Board of Directors, and supporters came together, despite immense challenges, to give money, technological equipment, and more so that the Center had the tools to help clients struggling with anxiety, depression, grief, and the enormous stress and disorientation the pandemic created. As a result of these efforts, NCC didn't miss a single day of providing care. That is truly something to celebrate.

To view a recording of the event, visit our website at [nwcounseling.org/growing-hope-virtual](https://nwcounseling.org/growing-hope-virtual).

## Board Member News

### *A Warm Welcome to Marita Keyes!*

We are pleased to welcome new Board Member, Marita Keyes, LPC, to our team. As a clinician and former therapist at NCC, she will bring valuable clinical perspective to the Board. Having moved to New York after retirement, she will be our first remote Board Member! We are thrilled to have Marita to help guide our mission of providing professional mental health services to all, regardless of faith or finances.



## Interested in board membership?

Are you interested in helping make sure anyone in need of mental health care gets it? Consider joining the NCC Board of Directors or a committee! NCC is looking for individuals who care about the Center and its clients. Whether you are interested in the near or distant future, contact Erin Peters at [erin@nwcounseling.org](mailto:erin@nwcounseling.org) for more information!

## Special Support *Thank you to the following partners for recent grants:*

BP Lester and Regina John Foundation  
Clark Foundation

Hoover Family Foundation

MJ Murdock Charitable Trust – for ongoing support

*These generous funders help subsidize the quality mental health care we provide to those affected by COVID, who struggle financially, or seek culturally-appropriate therapy in Spanish.  
On behalf of each of our clients, thank you for making our work possible!*

# Circle of Strength 2021: Celebrating 20 Years of Light and Hope

## A Free Virtual Fundraising Event

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Circle of Strength, a fundraising brunch that raises hope and money for the counseling needs of low-income mothers and their children. Join us for a live virtual event filled with joy, inspiration, advocacy, and information about the state of mental health in our community! And in 2021, your COS gift will go even further! Thanks to a generous anonymous donor and the Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund, every donation of \$250 or more made to NCC will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to \$15,000!

**Thank You to Our Sponsors:** Deborah Habel and Bruce Gulliver, Marilyn and Tom Fink, Northwest Lawfirm, Pacific Residential Mortgage, Pacific Seafood, Providence Health & Services, Spencer Family Foundation, Stoel Rives, LLP, and Weston Kia Buick GMC.

**Saturday, September 18 • 10:00 am-11:00 am**

*This year at your house, next year at our house!*

Check for updates at [nwcounseling.org/circle-of-strength-virtual](http://nwcounseling.org/circle-of-strength-virtual)



## Ways to Help Right Now

- We are continuing to use teletherapy as an important counseling tool. We're looking for laptops or tablets (manufactured 2012 or later) to assist with remote therapy.
- As our staff grows, our refrigerator space shrinks! We are looking for an apartment-sized fridge to make sure our staff has a place to keep their perishables.
- Ergonomic chairs are key for maintaining health at the office. Help us protect our staff by donating chairs that support the back, neck, and shoulders.
- One of our microwaves has now become a paperweight. We are looking for a working microwave to replace it.
- As we welcome clients back into the office, we would like to improve the comfort of our waiting room. First impressions are important in making clients feel safe and welcome. We are looking for good quality chairs and a small coffee table.

Email [donate@nwcounseling.org](mailto:donate@nwcounseling.org) if you have questions or can help procure these items!

## Upcoming Workshops

Join us for our enlightening and informative virtual workshops! Get more information and sign up online at [nwcounseling.org/product-category/workshops](http://nwcounseling.org/product-category/workshops), or call **503-253-0964**.

### **Breaking Up with Codependency – Virtual Workshop**

Saturday, August 28 • 10 am – 12 pm PT

### **Building a Grief Practice – Virtual Workshop**

Friday, October 22 • 1 pm – 3 pm PT

### **Stages of Change – Virtual Workshop**

Saturday, November 20 • 10:00 am – 11:30 am PT

### **Understanding Depression – Virtual Workshop**

Saturday, December 11 • 9 am – 11 am PT

The Northwest  
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Portland, Oregon 97220

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## Social Media

Find us on social media for mental health tips, event information, and client stories! Or visit our website for short, timely articles of interest written by NCC staff.



**The Northwest Catholic Counseling Center**  
LevantarPDX



**@nccorg**  
**@2Have2HoldPDX**



**@ncc1986**  
**@2Have2HoldPDX**



**The Northwest Catholic Counseling Center**



**The Northwest Catholic Counseling Center**

[nwcounseling.org](http://nwcounseling.org)

## Website Wow!

Over the past few months, the NCC team worked hard doing a major overhaul of the Center's website.

The update was prompted by significant issues with performance, translation, and access on mobile devices by people with disabilities.

This fantastic revamp enables easy bill pay, fast workshop pay and sign up, streamlined navigation, as well as advanced and seamless translation into Spanish! Log on and see all that NCC has to offer!



[nwcounseling.org](http://nwcounseling.org)

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