



The Northwest Catholic Counseling Center

Volume XXV

Summer 2022

Number 2

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Circle Of Strength – Now More Than Ever

The **Circle of Strength**, our fall fundraiser raising money to cover mental health care for women and children in need, will be back in person for the first time in three years! The October 8 event will both welcome women for brunch at the Madeleine Hall and be live-streamed for those more comfortable with watching from home.

I read some dismaying statistics recently illustrating how critical the Circle of Strength is to our community. Did you know that *100 million people* in America are saddled with medical debt? That is almost a third of the entire American population. A quarter of adults with health care debt owe more than \$5,000. And about 1 in 5 with any amount of debt said they don't expect to ever pay it off. That may be your next-door neighbor who had a heart attack or a coworker with a high school-age daughter who attempted suicide. These friends and neighbors believe they will die still owing medical debt.

The sad truth is that in many ways our healthcare system is designed to create debt. The financial and psychological weight of these debts is hard to fathom. Although it can be easy to slip into despair, numbers like these remind me how grateful I am to work somewhere that is working to address these injustices. Inherent to the NCC mission is the commitment to provide services to all, regardless of ability to pay. Over the last two years, during the depths of the pandemic, NCC provided 13,600 mental health appointments to anyone in need, with some people paying as little as \$1 a session.

Your support allows us to fill in the gap between what people can pay and the cost of providing life-changing services. This generosity means clients receive the care they need without the burden of high costs and mounting debt. Please be part of providing compassion and care to our community, and join us in expanding our Circle of Strength.

Erin Peters, Executive Director



Providing Help...
...Creating Hope

OCTOBER 8, 2022
10 AM-12 PM

CIRCLE OF STRENGTH

*The Madeleine Hall, NE Portland,
and live-streamed*



Buy tickets and tables
now online at
nwcounseling.org/cos-2022

Want to sponsor?
Email
erin@nwcounseling.org
or call 503-253-0964

New Community Partner: Raíces de Bienestar

Raíces de Bienestar and **Northwest Catholic Counseling Center** are partnering to offer eligible adults up to **4 free telebehavioral health sessions in Spanish and English**



focused on skills training to manage the stressors caused by wildfires and other disasters.

These telehealth sessions are offered via secure online video or phone to un- and under-insured Latinx community members. **Call Raíces de Bienestar at 971-417-6054** to inquire about this service or make your appointment, or contact NCC for more information.

Wedding Bells On The Horizon?



Do you know an engaged couple who wants to strengthen the foundation of their relationship? **Our marriage preparation workshops are**

facilitated by our trained counselors and tailored to each couple's needs and areas for growth. Couples can choose from individual sessions, a weekend workshop, or a combination of both.

Weekend Workshop

**September 23rd–24th or
November 4th–5th**

Friday from 5:30 pm–8:00 pm and Saturday from 9:00 am–11:00 am and 12:30 pm–3:00 pm. Couples must attend each session; cost is \$250 per couple.

Learn more and sign up online at nwcounseling.org/product-category/marriage-preparation or call 503-253-0964.

Growing Hope Success

Thank you to all who joined us in **Growing Hope** for our community during Mental Health Awareness month! We are proud to say that our May campaign raised \$30,000. Your dedication to ensuring that mental health care is accessible to everyone truly gives us all hope.

There's still time to give! Go to nwcounseling.org/growing-hope-2022.



NCC Gives Kids A Helping Hand

So many kids can't access mental health care, so **NCC and Holy Cross Catholic School joined forces** this last school year to help those most in need.

NCC therapist Jeremy Richardson, LPC, spent Thursdays at the North Portland school counseling students who couldn't get to our office. Jeremy said, "I was given a fantastic opportunity to assist several students who otherwise would not have had access to services. It was really rewarding to be able to assist these students work through some significant challenges and connect with them at a time and place that was much more convenient for them and their families. The challenges students face are enormous and I was happy to engage with some students to provide some guidance and support in a really tumultuous time."

We are excited to continue our partnership with Holy Cross during the 2022–2023 school year and carry on providing vital services to students who need them!



A Note Of Gratitude

Those of us working as therapists at NCC are reminded frequently that our services are even more crucial to vulnerable populations since the Covid-19 pandemic began and as its impacts continue to reverberate.



The increased isolation caused by the pandemic is one major factor—we know that a significant coping and regulating factor is our contact with supportive family, friends, and acquaintances. Recent research has even revealed significant mental health benefits from daily routine contact with those we don't know well—at grocery stores, the post office, the gym—connections related to activities we previously took for granted and that have been so curtailed during the pandemic. I have seen firsthand that long-term isolation has particularly impacted those who are aging and who live alone.

Suffice it to say, many are struggling. And many of the more affordable counseling programs in our community have had up to 6-month waiting lists for services. NCC continues to provide essential support during this difficult time, and our clients confirm that this support has been invaluable. I have clients who have never been able to afford mental health services, but our sliding scale fees open that door for them. I am grateful to work in an environment with colleagues dedicated to making a difference in the face of so much need. I want to thank the NCC Board, volunteers, staff, and supporters for continuing to make it possible to provide these essential services to those who are most in need during these challenging times.

NCC Therapist Kathleen Butler

Making An Impact

In the first six months of 2022, NCC has provided:

3,251 counseling sessions to those in our community working through depression, anxiety, grief, trauma, family conflict, and so much more.

1,204 of those sessions were sliding scale, where uninsured clients pay what they can, with some paying as little as \$1 a session.

539 sessions so far in 2022 were **for youth and adolescents** coping with the rapidly changing and often tumultuous world around them.



Welcome To Our New Staff!

Lacie Baumer

Lacie (she/her) is not new to NCC. She started as an administrative intern when she was an undergraduate student at Concordia University. After that, when she decided to pursue a master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at George Fox University, Lacie returned to NCC for her graduate internship. We are thrilled to have Lacie come back to NCC after graduation as a Licensed Professional Counselor Associate. In her free time, Lacie enjoys painting, reading, movies, spending time with family and friends, and traveling.



Aaron Fry

Aaron (he/him) is a graduate counseling student intern earning a master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at George Fox University. Aaron's experience is primarily in individual counseling with clients working through major life changes, anxiety, relationship issues, grief, loss, and shame. He also is incorporating couples and family therapy into his skill set, as well as substance use and institutional trauma. His clinical approach looks to address culture and systems at work in each client's life using the language of trauma-informed care.



Kalie Self

Kalie (she/her) is NCC's new Bookkeeping and Administrative Assistant. Kalie is a native Portlander with over 10 years of experience in the non-profit field. She is a graduate of Portland State University with a bachelor's degree in Child, Youth, and Family Studies. When she is not dedicating her time to social work, she loves to write, go to comedy shows, and travel, making sure to soak up nature in whatever way she can.



We Are Hiring!

Do you want to join a team of passionate people committed to providing mental health care to our community? NCC is hiring a **Bilingual Therapist-Program lead**, and a full-time **mental health therapist**. We'll be posting more jobs soon, so keep an eye out!

Head to nwcounseling.org/job-openings for more job descriptions and application instructions.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Erin Peters

CLINICAL LEADERSHIP

Clista Prella-Tworek, LPC,
CADC III, QMHP

Michelle Sideroff, LPC

CLINICAL STAFF

Lacie Baumer,
Licensed Professional
Counselor Associate

Kathleen Butler, MSW,
CSWA, CADC-I, QMHP

Marchelle Carl,
Licensed Professional
Counselor Associate

Tod Fiste, LPC

Aaron Fry, Graduate Intern

Thomás Grubb, LPC

Lu Lu,
Licensed Professional
Counselor Associate

Jeremy Richardson, LPC

DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE

Annie Teer

ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST

Dinorah Alvarenga

BOOKKEEPER AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Kalie Self

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

Vickie Carl
Nancy Fredricks



OFFICE HOURS

9:00am – 5:00pm
*Evening and Saturday
appointments available*

nwcounseling.org

Evolving Structure

In 2019 two of NCC's founding sisters, **Sr. Barbara Kennedy and Sr. Sarah Deeby**, were called back to Omaha, Nebraska, to assume leadership positions at the Servants of Mary Mother House. As their responsibilities in Omaha have grown, the time they had available to spend with NCC's Board of Directors has decreased. As a result, the Sisters requested that NCC update the organization's governance documents, releasing them from their legal and oversight responsibilities.

Fortunately, NCC's strong and committed Board has always had primary governance responsibilities, and is committed to carrying the Founders' mission and vision into the future.

This governance change has no impact on any of NCC's day-to-day activities or the work of our excellent staff in providing counseling and serving clients. The Sisters will always be the foundation on which NCC stands! You can read the full letter from the Board online at nwcounseling.org/a-note-from-the-ncc-board.

Farewell To A Longtime Friend

NCC lost a dedicated supporter and advocate when **Jerry Bitz** passed away on April 20, 2022.

Jerry served as the NCC Board President and Treasurer for many years and he and his wife, Carol, have supported NCC for more than two decades.



We feel blessed we got to know Jerry, and our thoughts are with his family and friends.

**The Northwest
Catholic Counseling Center**
8383 NE Sandy Blvd., Suite 205
Portland, Oregon 97220

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-profit
Organization
US Postage
Paid
Permit #22
Portland, OR



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

Help NCC With Office Work



We are looking for an office volunteer to assist with scanning paper files. If you have some basic computer knowledge and are interested in helping out at NCC, please contact info@nwcounseling.org.

Want to save paper?

If you'd like to receive newsletters and thank yous from us electronically to save paper and postage, please say so! Just email info@nwcounseling.org