



2026 South Dakota Behavioral Health Conference: Your Journey Matters

Breakout Session Speaker Bios



Aaron Bergman, PhD

Dr. Bergman is the Director of Behavioral Health for the Center for Family Medicine, The Sioux Falls Family Medicine Residency, and Pierre Rural Family Medicine Residency, and an Assistant Professor of Family Medicine and Psychiatry at the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine. Previously, he was an Assistant Professor of Family Medicine at the University of Colorado School of Medicine where he joined after completing a T-32 Post-Doctoral Fellowship at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. He is passionate about integrated primary care behavioral health and enhancing the capacity of front-line medical providers to support the behavioral health of their communities.



Aimee Deliramich, PhD

Dr. Deliramich is a licensed clinical psychologist and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the University of South Dakota Center for Disabilities in Sioux Falls. She provides interdisciplinary autism evaluations for children and adults and trains graduate students through the LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities) program. Dr. Deliramich earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Wyoming, her master's degree in counseling psychology from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, and her doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of South Dakota. She also leads statewide education and outreach initiatives and serves as the Clinical and Education Training Coordinator for BEAM-SD (Behavioral Health, Education, Access, and Management for South Dakota).



Amelia Henderson, CSW-PIP, NHA

Amelia Henderson, CSW-PIP, NHA is the Program Director at the SD Human Services Center – Geriatric Program. She has been with the hospital for fourteen years and has served in her current role over the past seven years. Amelia has experience as a social worker in long-term care and hospice. In her current role, Amelia is involved in supporting community nursing home facilities when faced with challenging behaviors, implementing therapeutic frameworks, and providing direct oversight of the Geriatric Program.



Amy Klimisch, CNP, FNP-BC, PMHNP-BC, QMHP

Amy Klimisch is a board certified nurse practitioner who has over 20 years experience in the psychiatric field primarily in adult and geriatrics.



Andrea Effling, MA, NCC, CSDCA

Andrea is the School Counseling & Student Support Administrator at the SD Department of Education, providing support to educators since 2015. In her work, she oversees the Office of Student Wellness and Supports, which equips educators to assist students to learn, thrive and grow. She provides leadership and support to school counselors, works with school-based mental health, suicide prevention, K-12 career development, and connects with state partners to further support the well-being of school-aged youth. Prior to her work at the DOE, Andrea has experience being employed as a school counselor, college admissions representative, and outreach counselor.



Angela Waldner, CHW

As a School Safety Specialist with the South Dakota Department of Public Safety, Office of Homeland Security, Angela Waldner supports K–12 schools in strengthening safe, supportive learning environments. She works with administrators, educators, and law enforcement to implement best practices in threat assessment, prevention, and response. Angela leads training and outreach on programs such as Safe2Say SD and trauma-informed approaches, with a focus on early intervention and student well-being. She is committed to building strong partnerships that enhance school safety and promote positive outcomes for students across South Dakota.



Audrey Simmons

Audrey is the Substance Use Prevention Program Specialist at the SD Department of Social Services, Division of Behavioral Health and is responsible for administratively supporting substance use prevention efforts and assisting in supporting suicide prevention efforts as needed.



Brenna Koedam

Brenna Koedam serves as the Chief of Behavioral Health for the South Dakota Department of Social Services, where she leads statewide strategy, policy, and oversight for behavioral health services throughout the state. Brenna and her team work across systems and through partnerships to ensure access to high-quality, person-centered care for individuals and families impacted by mental health and substance use disorders. Brenna has over 26 years of experience in both clinical and administrative positions. Brenna has fulfilled clinical roles as both a licensed mental health professional as well as an advanced addictions counselor. Her background includes regional system leadership in Iowa, developing integrated co-occurring treatment models, managing large provider networks, and advancing data-driven improvements in nonprofit and public settings.



Brett Kollars, MHSA

Brett Kollars, MHSA, serves as Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Sioux Falls. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from South Dakota State University and a Master of Health Services Administration from the University of Kansas Medical Center. Brett began his career in Kansas City with the Veterans Health Administration, where he studied healthcare reimbursement strategies. He later returned to Sioux Falls to oversee a remote patient monitoring program for The Good Samaritan Society before joining Avera Medical Group, where his work focused on strategy for value-based healthcare contracts. That experience—particularly the shift toward improving health outcomes rather than simply delivering healthcare services—sparked a deeper interest in public health and the factors that shape well-being outside the clinical setting. That interest ultimately led Brett to Parks and Recreation, where he now works to advance the role parks, recreation, and access to nature play in building healthier, more connected communities.



Carmen Spurling

Carmen works at Active Generations in the Caregiver Support and Adult Day Services programs. She helps families navigate the caregiving journey by locating resources, providing education, and offering personalized support based on their needs. She has spent the past 15 years working with seniors in various capacities and recognizes that each person is entitled to their own version of happiness and quality of life.



Cassandra Haag, M.A.I.S., CTRS

Cassandra Haag, M.A.I.S., CTRS is the Director of Recreational Therapy at the South Dakota Human Services Center in Yankton, where she leads the department in providing recreational therapy services across the hospital's behavioral health treatment programs. She is passionate about helping individuals build meaningful, healthy lives through recreation, leisure education, and community engagement, and has dedicated her career to advancing evidence-based recreational therapy services that support recovery, independence, and overall well-being. Cassandra holds a Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of South Dakota with concentrations in Business Leadership, Health Sciences, and Public Health, bringing together clinical expertise and leadership to strengthen behavioral health care.



Chelsea Randall, MHA

Chelsea Randall is a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe and serves as the Senior Director of Generational Health Programs. Since joining the leadership team in June 2022, she has applied her Masters of Healthcare Administration from Colorado State University to build sustainable health programs for the future. Chelsea balances her professional passion for public health with her most important role: being a mother of two.



Clay Pavlis, M.D.

Clay Pavlis, M.D., earned his BS in Biology after graduating Summa Com Laude from South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD. He attended Medical School at the University of Minnesota – Duluth and the University of South Dakota School of Medicine. He is board-certified in Adult Psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. Dr. Pavlis is the Chief Medical Officer of MWI Health. MWI Health is built on a foundation of meaningful connections and is home to a talented team of providers who focus exclusively on mental health treatment, offering a personalized approach to psychiatric care, including medication management, psychotherapy, and specialized treatment options.



Crystal Treviño

Crystal Treviño is the Program Director for Adoption, Foster Care, and Kinship Services at Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota (LSS). She leads a statewide team that delivers comprehensive post-adoption support services under contract with the state of South Dakota. Crystal and her team provide ongoing resources, coaching, and trauma-informed care to adoptive families across the state, helping them navigate challenges and build strong, lasting connections. With a Master's degree in Human Services and a background in social work, Crystal is dedicated to strengthening families through collaborative and compassionate support that extends well beyond adoption finalization.



Don Teater, MD, MPH

Don Teater is a board certified family physician who has practiced medicine for over 30 years. He was the lead facilitator for the expert panel during the development of the CDC Guidelines for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain 2016. From 2013-2016, Don was the Medical Advisor at the National Safety Council leading their effort to reduce opioid abuse and overdose. Don and his wife Martha, live in Denver, CO. He sees patients in Alaska (at two tribal health organizations) and in North Carolina (at an FQHC) providing treatment of pain and addiction and speaks nationally on the public health aspects of our ongoing opioid crisis.



Duane J Kavanaugh, MS, NCC, CCMHC, LPC-MH

Duane Kavanaugh MS, NCC, CCMHC, LPC-MH has worked in the field of mental health for more than 35 years. As clinician, clinical supervisor, administrator and university adjunct, Duane has been a frequent presenter for professional conferences, college course and public presentations. Topics range from issues in mental health, ethics, and healthy living. Duane is known for timely and informative presentations combined with a healthy amount of humor.



Gabrielle Hoing

Gabby has over 20 years of healthcare experience, beginning as a CNA and medication aide, where she discovered her passion for caring for others. While earning a degree in Health Services Administration from the University of South Dakota, she worked as a home care caregiver. After graduation, she helped launch a private duty home care agency in Sioux Falls for one of the nation's largest senior care providers and later advanced to a corporate role, designing business models and supporting agency growth. In 2016 she founded Kore Cares, now ranked in the top 10% of home care agencies nationwide. Gabby lives in Hartford, SD with her husband and two sons.



Hannah Holen

Hannah Holen is an Adoption Program Specialist for the state of Department of Social Services in South Dakota. She currently oversees post adoption services, providing support and guidance to families after adoption finalization. Hannah began her career in child welfare in 2010 as a Family Services Specialist with Child Protection Services, where she worked in multiple roles focused on child safety, family engagement, and case management. Her experience across the child welfare system gives her a comprehensive understanding of the needs of families throughout the adoption process. Hannah has been in her current position since 2021 and remains committed to improving post adoption support and long term permanency outcomes for children and families.

Heidi Aderhold, Ed.S.

Heidi Aderhold, Ed.S. is an Education Specialist with the University of South Dakota Center for Disabilities. In her role at the Center for Disabilities, Ms. Aderhold conducts graduate-level trainings, assists with diagnostic clinics, serves as a liaison for schools, and provides technical assistance to professionals, parents, and community members. Ms. Aderhold received her bachelor's degree from Winona State University in Elementary Education. She went on to earn her master's degree in Special Education from George Mason University in Fairfax, VA. Most recently, she earned her Educational Specialist Degree from the University of South Dakota with certifications in K-12 building-level leadership and Special Education Director. Her professional journey includes six years of teaching in a self-contained special education setting in Virginia, primarily serving students with cognitive disabilities and autism, followed by one year as a resource room teacher. Following her experience in Virginia, Ms. Aderhold relocated to Sioux Falls, SD. She taught special education at an elementary school for six years, where she had the opportunity to work with students and their families as they embraced and navigated a wide variety of disabilities. Most recently, she served eight Sioux Falls schools as an Elementary Special Education Instructional Coach.





Jeremy Johnson

Jeremy Johnson is the Administrator of the South Dakota Human Services Center (HSC) South Dakota's only publicly funded inpatient behavioral health campus. Jeremy has a Masters Degree in Social Work and is a Licensed Nursing Facility Administrator. Throughout his career at HSC, Jeremy has worked as a Social Work Intern, Human Services Social Worker (BSW), Psychiatric Social Worker (MSW), Program Director, Clinical Director, and campus Administrator. Jeremy lives in Yankton with his wonderful wife of 23 years.



Kari A. Oyen, PhD, LP, NCSP

Dr. Kari Oyen is an Associate Professor of School Psychology and the Program Director of the School Psychology Program. Dr. Oyen earned her doctorate in school psychology from the University of South Dakota. Dr. Oyen's research focuses on risk and protective factors that lead to student outcomes as well as the role of advocacy in public service settings. She also examines the impact of trauma and child maltreatment on student outcomes in rural settings. Dr. Oyen is currently the NASP Liaison to the American Psychological Association. She has published research in School Psychology Review, Psychology in the Schools, The Rural Educator, Contemporary School Psychology, & Psychological Services.



Kassy Dunn, LAC

Kassy Dunn is a Licensed Addictions Counselor in the state of South Dakota. She currently works at the Division of Behavioral Health as the Juvenile Services Program Manager overseeing mental health and substance use services for youth across the state. Kassy began her career in behavioral health services as an outpatient substance use counselor in 2012 and has worked in various levels of care with both adults and juveniles. She also has experience as a supervisor of a substance use disorder services program. Kassy earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Addiction Studies from the University of South Dakota.



Kerri Cox, M.S.

Kerri is the Director of Prevention Services at the SE Prevention Resource Center at Volunteers of America, Dakotas. In this role, she provides training, technical assistance, curriculum and resources to schools, treatment programs, coalitions and other groups in the southeast region of SD. Kerri previously served as a school counselor in the Sioux Falls area for over 25 years, with experience in both urban Title I schools and rural districts serving as a high school, elementary and PreK-12 school counselor. Kerri is passionate about curriculum, school-wide initiatives, and supporting youth leadership.



Kevin Dunn

Kevin Dunn was appointed Chief of Developmental Disabilities Services in April 2026. He previously served as Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), a role he assumed in October 2024. Before joining DDD, Mr. Dunn spent 23 years at the South Dakota Developmental Center (SDDC), where he most recently served as Assistant Director. With more than two decades of leadership experience in developmental disability services, he is committed to strengthening supports and improving outcomes for individuals and families across South Dakota.



Lori Williamson, LMFT, LAC

Lori Williamson is the Mental Health Services Program Specialist with the DSS Division of Behavioral Health since February 2024. Lori is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Licensed Addiction Counselor and has worked in a variety of mental health and substance use disorder settings for 30+ years.

Dr. Matthew Stanley



Dr. Matthew Stanley, DO, joined Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield in May 2023, taking on the newly established role of Senior Medical Director of Behavioral Health. Prior to his current position, Dr. Stanley held significant leadership roles including Vice President of the Behavioral Health Clinical Service Line and Medical Director at multiple Avera facilities: the Avera McKennan Behavioral Health Center and the Avera Addiction Care Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, as well as the Avera Marshall Behavioral Health Center in Marshall, Minnesota. With over 25 years of experience as a psychiatrist, Dr. Stanley is board certified by both the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and the American Board of Preventative Medicine in Addiction Medicine. He has also been recognized as a Lifetime Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association.



Melanie Boetel

Melanie Boetel has worked for the Division of Behavioral Health since 2013 and currently serves as the Director of the Division of Behavioral Health. Melanie has experience in multiple settings as a provider of behavioral health treatment services and as a program administrator overseeing crisis, prevention, treatment, and recovery support delivery and services. She obtained her Master of Arts degree in Counseling at the University of North Dakota.



Mike Keller, MATM

Mike Keller is the Suicide Prevention and Outreach Program Director for the Helpline Center. His focus is on suicide prevention through mental health trainings, support programs and grief journeys for those who lost loved ones to suicide. Mike has been supporting suicide prevention and supporting grief survivors for nearly 30 years with a particular emphasis with Veterans and mending moral injury wounds. When not at work, you can find Mike listening to music, fixing something around the house or going on lazy walks with his wife, Michelle.



Molly Brown

Molly is the Strategic Initiatives Program Specialist in the Division of Behavioral Health, where she supports the administration of the Opioid Settlement Fund. Before joining the Division in December, she worked as a data analyst for the Southwest Iowa Mental Health and Disability Services Region. In that capacity, she led initiatives to standardize data collection and improve data integrity across behavioral health crisis services throughout Iowa's Mental Health and Disability Services System. Molly received her doctoral degree in criminal justice from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.



Nikki Eining, CSW-PIP, QMHP

Nikki Eining is a private independent practice licensed social worker who serves as the Statewide Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Program Coordinator for The University of South Dakota, Sanford School of Medicine, and owns Grace Grit Growth Counseling LLC in Brookings. Nikki brings diverse experiences and passions, having spent over 19 years working in the behavioral health field. Her previous experience has focused on supporting youth and families in office, school, and community settings. She has a training background and professional experience in clinical mental health, education, research design, non-profit, program development, and trauma-informed care practices.



Natalie F. Holt, MD, MPH

Dr. Holt is Chief Medical Officer for the Great Plains Area Indian Health Service, overseeing clinical operations across 11 facilities in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska. She leads efforts to advance integrated, culturally responsive care, with a focus on behavioral health, substance use treatment, and maternal and child health in tribal communities. Since joining IHS in 2019, she has worked to expand trauma-informed care and integrate behavioral health into primary and maternal health services. Dr. Holt holds degrees from Yale School of Medicine and Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and is board certified in Anesthesiology and Preventive Medicine.



Dr. Scott Poland

Dr. Scott Poland brings over 40 years of experience working on suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention in school communities. Dr. Poland is currently a professor at the Nova Southeastern University (NSU) College of Psychology in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He is also the Director of NSU's Suicide and Violence Prevention Office. He previously worked in schools as a psychologist and a director of psychological services for 26 years. He is the author of eight books on school crisis and suicide prevention in schools is his highest priority.



Tayler McCarty

Tayler McCarty is the Program Director of the Journey On LOSS (Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors) Team, serving the Black Hills region of South Dakota. She leads a frontline postvention response program, partnering with law enforcement to provide immediate, on-scene support to individuals impacted by suicide loss. Tayler also volunteers with the Crisis Text Line, extending her support to individuals in crisis nationwide. She leads with lived experience as a survivor of a suicide attempt and six years sober from addiction, which deeply informs her work and the way she connects with others. She is a Certified Grief Recovery Method Specialist and serves on the 988 Policy Academy for SAMHSA.



Thomas Otten, LPC-MH

Thomas Otten serves as the Vice President of Avera Behavioral Health Hospital and behavioral health service line administrator throughout all Avera. With more than 30 years of experience in counseling and healthcare administration he oversees inpatient and outpatient operations, strategic planning, budgeting, and therapeutic programming. Thomas played a key role in expanding from 60 inpatient behavioral health beds to 160 currently. He has been instrumental in the development of life-changing programs including the Family Visitation Center and The Avera Addiction Care Centers for adults and adolescents. A native of South Dakota, Otten holds master's degrees in educational psychology (1993) and counseling (1993). He has a heart towards improving access and quality of mental health services for children, individuals, and families.



Trivia Afraid of Lightning-Craddock

Trivia Afraid of Lightning-Craddock (Mahka Ta' Tawanpi Wi) is a Lakota advocate, researcher, and consultant, an enrolled member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Miniconjou Band. Her work advances culturally grounded behavioral health, Indigenous wellness, systems transformation, and research and evaluation. She has served as Program Director at Friends of the Children—He Sapa and Program Manager with the Tribal Chairmen's Health Board, where she developed the HERO Conference. Her work includes Healing Within IPV, IndigeQuit, and the Hear Her Campaign, focusing on culturally responsive systems, community healing, and equity.