“Launching Young Adults” Keynote Presentation By Dr. Ed Hammer, B.A., M.S., M.Ed., LPC, LMFT, Ph.D

Dr. Ed Hammer is a licensed mental health professional who has worked for many years for the Department of Pediatrics at the Texas Tech School of Medicine in Amarillo in the area of Behavioral Pediatrics. He is currently a Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at the Department of Pediatrics, School of Medicine, Texas Tech Health Science Center at Amarillo since 2001. His concern is for the treatment of the total child and persons with special needs, including support for the family, coordination of community services, and public and private agencies. He is the author or co-author of six published assessment devices (the Callier-Azusa Scale, the Functional Skills Screening Inventory, the Helen Keller Functional Profile, the Assistive Devices Analysis Matrix (A.D.A.M.), the Classroom Management system, and the Neuropsychological Monitoring Inventory). He served as Project Director for the 6-year medically fragile grants that led to the Amarillo Pediatric Protocol, an NICU intervention for neonates and a PICU intervention for patients with head injury. He also is the founder and Principal Investigator for the Pediatric Research Network (PRN).

Breakout Session:

Neurodevelopmental Interventions-Brain Development and its Impact on Disabilities"

This session addresses behavioral issues in IDD population and a different approach to learning concerning actual consideration of the "brain" when working with our population. In this session he teaches us to learn how to work with the neuroplasticity of the brain to help it reach its goals of surviving and using all its space to live in the community, preparing them to be productive, providing ongoing learning opportunities, and taking advantage of today's technology and resources to increase learning opportunities.
Gina Carandas Peterson, RN  
(RN Consultant with Twogether Consulting-Houston, TX)  

**Nursing Peer Review Process In IDD Provider Facilities**  
- For HCS Providers: For HCS, TXhML, ICF Providers: The Texas Board of Nursing Requires all businesses to have Nursing Peer Review Process implemented, if they have 10 or more nurses employed or contracted by the facility. Review of basic concepts of nursing peer review and importance of implementing nursing peer review process properly.

Michelle Garcia, Psy.D. & Associates  
(website: www.drmgarcia vpweb.com)  
Her group provides the following behavioral services: Individual Group Counseling, Psychological Neuropsychological Testing, Testing, Behavioral support (BSP's), IEE's/IEP's and ARO Advocacy. As well as, training for professionals, educators, and families. They also supply additional supports such as: Workshops, Social skills training, social stores, and resource building as well as Coordination with healthcare providers, work and day programs, state and other agencies.

Breakout sessions include:
- The Compliance Game
- FIE: A Whole Person Perspective

---

**Bernadette Richardson**  
(Director of Program Services Kenmar Residential – Austin, TX) – Autism

Bernadette Richardson has worked in the Social Service field since 1986. She is a Graduate from Gannon University, Erie PA. Her field of study was in Social Work with a minor in counseling. Bernadette worked the overnight at a group home as she attended the University. Bernadette’s work with the IDD population continued after graduation when working in a 56 bed Intermediate Care facility in Buffalo NY in conjunction with assisting program development within People Inc. She obtained a strong background in Autism and Autism spectrum disorder when Bernadette assisted the founder of Autistic Services in Amherst NY in the opening the first group home in that area for the Autistic population in 1988. The program was unique for it was placing 12 autistic men within one group home. The challenge was worth it the success of the program continues to grow today. The most difficult challenge was to help families with the transition from school into a community setting. This continues to be difficult as well today. Bernadette will provide an array of tips and resources to help with this process. Bernadette also attended the University of Buffalo specializing in Autism prior to relocating to Austin Texas 1993 where she accepted a position with Kenmar Residential Services.
Presenter/Panel Member

Carole L. Smith has advocated for services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities for the past 38 years. Currently she is the Executive Director of the Private Providers Association of Texas (PPAT), a position she has held for the past 20 years. PPAT is a non-profit trade organization representing private providers of Medicaid services to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Appointed by former HHSC Executive Commissioner Hawkins, she is a member of the Promoting Independence Advisory Committee. In October, 2013 she was appointed to the IDD System Redesign Advisory Committee (resultant of SB 7 - Nelson - 83rd R).

Prior to her position at PPAT, Ms. Smith was employed at 'legacy' Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (TDMHMR) in various positions at both the Austin State Supported Living Center (SSLC) and at the 'legacy' TDMHMR Central Office. During her tenure at the Austin SSLC, Ms. Smith served in a variety of positions including direct support staff, Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professional (QIDP), psychological assistant and, Assistant Director of Quality Management. She was also a volunteer advocate for two individuals receiving services at the SSLC until both transferred to San Antonio SSLC to be closer to their families. While at Central Office, she served as Director of the community-based ICF/IID Program, later serving as Director of Planning Development and Support - Strategic Planning.

Ms. Smith is an honors graduate of the University of Oklahoma. She is a member of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) and over the years has served in various positions at the national, regional and state chapter levels, including as Board President, Texas State Chapter (1995). She has received awards from 'legacy' TDMHMR, AAIDD - State Chapter and other organizations for her advocacy and leadership efforts on behalf of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Ms. Smith is the proud mother of one son, Staff Sgt. Daniel C. Smith (Marine Reservist). In January, 2007 he was assigned to active duty under President Bush's January 10, 2007 orders for an Iraq War Troop Surge. Following his deployment to Iraq, he received three commendations for outstanding leadership. Daniel graduated with honors from UT - Austin - McCombs School of Business, Masters Professional Accounting (MPA) - May, 2010, and is currently employed at Deloitte & Touche LLP - Austin.

Presenter

Dr. Deborah Jean Harding has worked for forty years in the field of behavioral studies, who holds her PhD in experimental psychology with a focus on social psychology, child development, and a minor in sociology, criminology and deviance. Dr. Harding is also a licensed professional counselor in the state of Texas who has counseled extensively with adults and children with trauma, including veterans and first responders with PTSD. She has also worked at two local hospices with families in crisis, treated children and adults with a wide variety of physical and cognitive disabilities, as well as having worked with addicted and criminal populations.

At present, Deborah is an associate professor at Amarillo College, in the areas of psychology, criminal psychology, social psychology, and sociology, including the sociology of marriage and family and criminology. She has developed and taught traditional, hybrid and online courses for several universities, including AC, Texas Tech, West Texas A&M and Capella University. She received her PhD from Texas Tech University, and her master’s degree from West Texas A&M University. Dr. Harding has won multiple awards for teaching excellence and innovation, including the APPLE AWARD and the MEAD TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD. She also received a TEACH FELLOWSHIP at TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY during her doctoral studies, as well as multiple research grants at Texas Tech and at West Texas A&M.

Prior to her counseling and teaching careers, Deborah spent the first sixteen years of her professional life as a musician, singer and songwriter, who got to travel around the world with her music. During those years, Deborah taught music to children, many with hearing loss and autism, at Cypress Avenue School. She also taught creative writing and music to the inmates in the New Mexico prison system. Deborah comes from a family with a proud history of military service, including her father and two uncles, two brothers and a nephew who served their country in the marines, navy and air force. Dr. Harding currently helps to fund raise for the Veterans at Amarillo College organization, and does pro bono counseling with veterans returning from combat in the Middle East.

At present, Dr. Harding lives in Amarillo, Texas with her husband, Jim, two Schnoodles, ten cats, and two birds. She is the mother of Jesse and Matt, mother-in-law to Sedef, and the grandmother of 8 year-old Lucas, a very talented boy with autism. She may be contacted at djharding@actx.edu or by phone at (806) 584-7569.

Session for Conference

- "Transitions in Sexuality: What To Do When My Little Kitten Becomes A Tom Cat!"
Yolanda Daggs, MBA, BSN, RN., is Division Nurse Manager for Intellectual Disabilities Services at MHMRA of Harris County. She is responsible for administrative & operational oversight, leadership, direction and management to licensed and non-licensed staff in the provision of delivering quality nursing care to individuals with mental and/or developmental disabilities in multiple Agency settings. Yolanda provides nursing leadership to various programs that includes the following Residential/ Waiver Programs- Texas Home Living, Home and Community-Based Services (HCS), IFC-IID, STARS Clinic, Dual Diagnoses and Authority-Nursing Services. She also serves as a role model and resource person who encourages professional growth/development among nursing staff. Yolanda helps ensure the delivery of quality nursing services throughout the IDD Division. Additionally, she develops and implements nursing policy/procedure and operational guidelines. Yolanda is expected to graduate Fall/2014 with a MSN in Executive Leadership from Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi.

Breakout Session:

**Determining When Healthcare Needs Exceed RN Delegation in the Community Setting**

**Description of Session:** Presentation will focus on determining when health care needs exceed the parameters of RN delegation in the community setting. We will discuss The Texas Board of Nursing Rule 225-RN Delegation to unlicensed personnel in independent living environment for individuals with stable and predictable conditions. Discussion also includes when the healthcare status of individuals living in a community setting exceeds the nurses’ ability to deliver services due to the level of health acuity and complex healthcare needs rendering that the individual is no longer suitable for RN delegation. We’ll also talk about developing and implementing operative guidelines/policies and procedures and or protocols to address these growing concerns.

**Objectives:**

- Compare common incidences/issues among other community independent living environments where RN delegation is utilized.
- Analyze a case study and determine if healthcare needs exceed RN delegation in the community setting.
- Identify essential elements in the development of operative guidelines and/or policy & procedure when RN delegation is no longer applicable. (22TAC. Rule 225- RN Delegation to Unlicensed Personnel in Independent Living Environments for Individuals with Stable & Predictable Conditions).

http://www.mhmraharris.org/IDD/iddservices.htm

Mary Alice Jackson, Esq. is a Florida Bar board certified elder law attorney, and is a founding partner at the Sarasota Elder Law Firm Boyer & Jackson, P.A. She is licensed to practice law in both Florida and Texas. Her practice includes special needs and long term care planning, estate planning, probate and end-of-life issues. She is a Preeminent rated attorney by Martindale Hubbell, and has also been named as a Florida Super Lawyer annually since 2006. Mary Alice is a co-author of Planning for the Elderly in Florida, a LexisNexis publication. She has served as chair of the Grass Roots Advocacy Committee for the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and on the Board of Directors and public policy committee for the Special Needs Alliance. Mary Alice is a past Chair of the Florida Bar Elder Law Section and served as President of the Sarasota County Bar Association in 2005. She is an adjunct professor at the Stetson University College of Law Elder LLM program. Mary Alice and her husband, Bob, reside in Austin, Texas. Mary Alice Jackson, Esq. was honored in 2012 by the Fellows of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA). NAELA which is a professional association of over 4,200 attorneys who are dedicated to improving the quality of legal services provided to seniors and people with special needs.

**NAELA Fellows** are attorneys who have been members of the Academy for at least three years, whose careers concentrate on Elder Law, and who have distinguished themselves both by making exceptional contributions to meeting the needs of older Americans and by demonstrating commitment to the Academy. Election as a Fellow signifies that the lawyer is recognized by peers as a model for others, and an exceptional lawyer and leader. The most significant component in the selection process is commitment and contributions to NAELA through committee participation, programs, and leadership.

**Sessions for the conference:**

- She will be focusing on special needs planning for individuals with disabilities and their families and navigating SSI, SSDI, CDB, and Medicaid/Medicare. She will be presenting the following sessions: “Special Needs Trust Planning in 2013 – Who Needs One, Who Doesn’t, and Why?” and "Alphabet Soup: SSI, SSDI, CDB, Medicaid and Medicare".
Russell Golden is a graduate of Abilene Christian University with a Bachelors of Applied Studies Degree in Human Services. He has over 33 year experience working with persons with developmental disabilities. He began his career as direct care staff at Abilene State Supported Living Center in Abilene, Texas. He then worked at Betty Hardwick Center serving in various positions including, Job Coach, ICF Residential Supervisor, Residential Supervisor of Demonstration Project. (This program assessed, evaluated and developed effective treatment plans for individuals with dual diagnosis who were returning to a community environment after a brief stay in a state mental health facility). Other positions included Continuity of Care Coordinator, Case Manager, Director of Case Management, and Crisis Intake Worker for Mental Health Services. He was employed as Area Director for a private HCS provider for over 4 years. Russell served on the Board of Southwest Society of Services Coordinators and was board president for three of those years. He also worked as a QMRP for a large ICF facility. He is currently the Customer Service Coordinator for TaskMaster Pro. He and his wife of 30 years, continue to live in Abilene.

www.taskmasterpro.com

Rev. Dr. Carla Cheatham has been a spiritual care counselor for 7 years and now works with Buckner Hospice in Austin, Texas. She received a B.A. in Psychology and began working as an experiential educator conducting team building for corporate and civic groups. While completing her M.A. in Psychology from Stephen F. Austin State University she served as an outdoor educator/ropes course facilitator with at-risk youth and ingpatients at a substance abuse treatment center through MHMR, a therapist serving children and families, a QMRP managing ICF group homes, a crisis counselor certified in Trauma Resolution Therapy, and an Associate Director of a residential wilderness treatment facility for adjudicated adolescent girls.

Rev. Cheatham received her Ph.D. in Health and Kinesiology from Texas A&M University where she taught classes in both areas and performed research on the interaction between religion and health and religion and sexuality. After receiving her Masters of Divinity from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University, she served as a local church pastor and an Executive Director of a multi-faith non-profit supporting worker justice.

Rev. Cheatham is the Leader of the Spiritual Caregivers Section for the National Council of Hospice and Palliative Professionals, a member of the Texas New Mexico Hospice Coordinating Development Committee, and a Board Member for the Child Friendly Faith Project and is grateful to now bring her training and experience to the challenge and gift of hospice work.

Breakout session: "Hospice 101: What Caregivers Need to Know" Here’s a brief description:

“One area of healthcare for which most persons are not prepared is the end of life. Hospice is one of the most misunderstood aspects of care and also one of the most overwhelming to consumers and caregivers, but the benefits and resources available are incredible. This presentation will describe what hospice is and isn’t and how the Medicaid Hospice Benefit can be of extra support to patients, families, and agencies. The hospice team works closely with all involved to make the final 6 months (or more) of a person’s life more peaceful and dignified while managing pain and other physical symptoms. The more those caring for persons with IDD understand, the greater the benefit for all.”

Professionals Web: http://carlacheatham.com

Blog: http://carlacheatham.wordpress.com

Eva Aguirre is the CEO at "The Center" since 2005. She has been employed with The Center since 1999. As the Chief Executive Officer of The Center, she is responsible for all aspects of strategic planning and direction for the agency. The Center has a long history of serving persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities since 1982, and has been associated with The Center since 1987.

Eva is extremely dedicated to the mission of the agency in a responsible and ethical manner to ensure its long term sustainability. Eva was also the Program Director for The Center in the past for the vocational/work program of The Center. She was responsible for all financial and managerial matters. The goal of the program is to train and empower adults with developmental disabilities to learn vocational skills needed for community based employment. She managed a team of over 25 employees and worked closely with the Executive Director in planning, financial and strategic goals for the program.

Eva currently serves on the Harris County Quality Assurance Committee of MHMRX, the Harris County Planning and Advisory Council of MHMRX, the PPAT representative to the Harris County IDD Needs Council, and is a senior member of the Texas and National Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. In November 2005, Eva served as the Director of the Adult Training and Employment Services program. Prior to working at The Center, Eva held positions with G. Pierce Wood Memorial Hospital and Sunshine Training Center in Orlando, Florida.
Kay Smith is a Licensed social worker with broad experience in the field of developmental disabilities, including management, training, curriculum development for staff, and casework. Kay trains new staff to license and inspect group homes and institutions for persons with intellectual disabilities. She is also a subject-matter expert for ICF-ID federal and state regulations as well as developing curricula for new staff and for providers. Kay has also been in the past a survey team manager for 9 years as well at DADS.

Specialties: Government management, ICF-ID, training, curriculum development

Breakout Session:

"Writing Plans of Corrections" For ICF/IID Program

**Amy Calvo, MSW**

VAST with HCC – Houston, TX

Ana received her Bachelors in Arts of Social Science with concentrations in Psychology and Sociology and a Minor in Political Science in 2002 from the University of Houston-Downtown. Ana went on to get her Master in Social Work from the University of Houston College Of Social Work in 2007. Ana currently works at Houston Community College Vocational Advancement and Social Skill Training (V.A.S.T.) Department as director of transition services where she prepares young adults with cognitive and physical disabilities lead a healthy and productive independent life. Before joining Houston Community College VAST, Ana worked at the Shriners Hospital for Children-Galveston/Houston as the transition coordinator for seven years and developed their transition program. Ana is very active in the community and serves as Chair for the City of Houston's Commission for People with Disability, on the board for Ms. Wheelchair Texas Foundation, MtxCamp board member and a member of the National Coalition for Assistive and Rehab Technology. Ana was recognized as one of the 100 Houston Latinas Women in Leadership in the city of Houston, and 2013 Houston Superlady. Currently Ana is the host of "No Barriers" televised on HCTV and won the 2013 Hometown Media Award from Alliance for Communication Media. As Ms. Wheelchair Texas 2009 Ana promoted her platform of helping the youth embrace their disabilities and achieve their dreams through education, employment, and community involvement.

Discussion on VAST Academy and how they provide post-secondary educational options at HCC to students with IDD or high functioning autism.

**Presenters**

Robert Von Minden, Director of LifeCare and Stacy Grace, Director of Development

Robert E. Von Minden is the Director of LifeCare with The Center Foundation. He has work at both The Center and The Center Foundation for over 49 years and in his current role with The Center Foundation since 2001. He was part of the Adult Training and Employment Services as General Plant Manager, Vocational Evaluator, Production Manager, and supervised all aspects of the Workshop on the West Dallas Campus, Northwest Work Program, Pasadena Work Program and The Adult Day Care. He is a graduate of St. Edwards University in Austin and has attended undergraduate studies at both The University of Houston and Dominican College. Mr. Von Minden serves as Guardian, Trustee, and Executor as requested by the Foundation or the Court System.

Stacy Grace—Director of Development with LifeCare has been in the nonprofit arena for 16 years serving agencies representing healthcare, education and social services. She joined The Center Foundation in July 2013, but is not new to The Center’s mission and the people served. Stacy volunteered at The Center as a Junior and Senior in high school and attributes her desire to work for nonprofits from that early experience. Additionally, Stacy is a family member too; she grew up with an Aunt who had developmental disabilities. Through the support of family and friends, her Aunt met someone "just like her" and they were married and lived independently for 20 years. Stacy is a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Greater Houston Chapter.

**Title:** LifeCare – A Plan for Their Future

**Course Description:** Guardianship. Trust Management. Advocacy Services. The Center Foundation LifeCare Team will share how they help families document their loved one's unique needs in a manner that ensures a continuation of their safety, comfort, lifestyle and happiness when their parent or primary caregiver is no longer able.
Norris Fergeson/Sole Proprietor of Fergeson Art Services & her Daughter Katie Fergeson

Norris J. Fergeson

Norris is the sole proprietor of Fergeson Art Services. She is an art historian who specializes in Modern Art, Contemporary Art, 20th century American Art, Prints and Drawings. She has held positions as museum curator, associate professor for the Art Institute and University of Texas in San Antonio. More significantly, she is the mother of a young adult with Asperger’s and is a passionate advocate for this population. She is presently involved and volunteering for the nonPareil Institute to bring learning and employment options to Houston. The NonPareil Institute offers practical solutions that provide a lifetime of sustainability, fulfillment and purpose to adults affected with autism. She is currently on the board at The Center. Norris’s daughter, Katie is now 26 and she and Katie have walked a long road together.

Session: “Welcome To Our World” A discussion of living with Aspergers and challenges that Katie and Norris have faced together