



TCSW/UTCSW Fall Advocacy & Social Justice Conference

Opening Plenary

Drema Bowers, MSSW – Pellissippi State Technical Community College

Different Lenses, Same Vision: Framing a Just Society

In an effort to address the many injustices around us, we have signed petitions, marched, protested, written op-eds, contacted our elected officials and more - often to little or no avail. Some of us are becoming disillusioned and fatigued wondering – What Now?

Our opening session aims to share some practical ways to continue to engage in justice work and introduce participants to a Social Justice Lens tool that can be utilized to provide a framework to help guide policy, plan actions, and evaluate resources for social change.

Breakout Session I

Mental Health

Challenging Social Injustice, Stigma & Disparities in Mental Health

Ben Harrington, MHAET

Description: This session will take participants on a journey through key social justice issues (stigma, gun violence, access to care, de-criminalization of mental health, and health care disparities) as each relates to mental health care in the past, present and future.

Objectives:

Participants will be able to describe “social injustices” persons with behavioral health diagnoses encounter
Participants will be able to discuss stigma of mental illness, 2nd amendment rights, and research findings on gun violence
Participants will be able to describe access to care issues, criminalization of mental illness and mental health disparities from both a national and local perspective.

Senior Care

Peggy Ransom, CAC

Description: Information regarding the challenges facing providers and families in ever-changing health care policies for seniors in need of ongoing care.

Criminal Justice

Knox County Public Defender’s Community Law Office - Holistic Representation

Mark Stephens, JD & Sarah Buchanan, MSSW

Description: Social workers often interact with the criminal justice system, but generally have little understanding of the stages of a typical criminal proceeding. This session will include information about the 5 stages (from arrest to trial) along with discussion of the psychosocial and economic impact of interaction with the criminal justice system. The Knox County Public Defender’s Community Law Office holistic defense model will be shared, with focus on how social workers are utilized to reduce recidivism and improve quality of lives and community safety.

Learning objectives:

1. Gain knowledge about the 5 stages of a typical criminal proceeding to better understand circumstances faced by clients when they interact with the criminal justice system.
2. Develop an understanding of the psychosocial and economic impact of interaction with the criminal justice system on individuals, families and communities.

3. Develop an understanding of the Knox County Public Defender's Community Law Office holistic defense model, with a focus on how social workers are utilized in a public defense setting to respond to the impact of the criminal justice system on individuals, families and communities.

Breakout Session II

Education

"Baggage Fees May Apply"

Tanisha Fitzgerald-Baker, Project GRAD

Description: When supporting students and families from high needs communities on their educational journey, we have to acknowledge what they have in their "luggage". Additional strategies, tools and resources are required to equip them for success and this may require us to do a little more. Collaborate on ways to level the educational playing field for students of color and those that are economically disadvantaged.

Integrated Health/Healthcare

Vine School Health Center: A non-directive, trauma-informed community approach in a school-based health center.

Rachel Ross, LCSW

Corey Snyder, RPT, LMSW

Description:

In this workshop, participants will receive an overview on how this approach gives voice to a vulnerable population while having an adaptive, flexible structure to promote change and meet community needs.

Learning Objectives:

1. Clear definition and understand of the non-directive model.
2. Increase knowledge and implications regarding trauma-informed versus trauma-focused care
3. Learn at least three strategies to adapt to community needs.

Homelessness

HMIS- Tracking Homelessness in Knoxville's Youth – What Can We Do Together?

Lisa Higginbotham,

Annette Beebe, CAC

Description: This session will highlight homeless services in Knoxville-Knox County, TN and how data is being utilized to increase conversations and collaboration towards addressing homelessness. Annette Beebe will speak about her advocacy experiences as the CAC Youth WINS coordinator and Lisa Higginbotham will discuss how data is utilized by local agencies to advocate for increased services and coordination of care to help persons experiencing homelessness.

Breakout Session III

Clinical Ethics

Challenging Racism: Recognizing Racism in Clinical Practice

Donna Mitchell, LMSW

Covenant Counseling & Consultation Services, LLC.

Description: Standing-Up Against the "Invisibility Syndrome" – This session aims to lead clinicians on a journey to evaluate and recognize personal core beliefs and embrace cultural humility, so attitudes toward ourselves and our clients can be ethical and improving. Applying cultural humility to evidence-based practices is beneficial to understanding the constant process of learning and growing in the framework of racism.

Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of this session, clinicians will be able to:

1. Identify willingness and ability to explore personal core beliefs about Equality and Equity.
2. Recognize the need for cultural humility to offset the Invisibility Syndrome.
3. Demonstrate the inequitable nature and power disparity of the relationship between dominant and minority groups in society and how such practices are perpetuated in clinical practice.

Macro Ethics

When Personal Values Conflict With Professional Ethics:

Ethical Dilemmas and Cultural Sensitivity in Working with LGBTQ Populations

Paula Foster, LCSW

Executive Director, TCSW

Description: The freedom to hold and express one's religious beliefs is a core value of American society. But what happens when your personal values appear to be in conflict with your professional values and ethical responsibilities? How do you address these conflicts? How do you reconcile your beliefs with your professional duties? This workshop will challenge you to examine your beliefs and values while comparing them to your professional ethics. It will increase your knowledge of the LGBTQ community and provide you with strategies for addressing your internal conflicts surrounding the provision of services.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will gain a greater sensitivity to and understanding of gay history and culture.
2. Participants will receive an overview of the LGBT civil rights movement including a timeline of the marriage equality decision from the Supreme Court
3. Participants will gain an understanding of the continued challenges facing the LGBT community and the impact on stigma and access to social services.
4. Participants will be challenged to explore their ability to integrate personal values and professional ethics surrounding their views about homosexuality.
5. Participants will learn strategies for addressing ethical dilemmas when personal and religious values seem to conflict with the core values of social work

Food Insecurity

"Who's Hungry?"

Drema Bowers, PSTCC

Alice Allen, CAC

Description:

This session will explore food insecurity in college student populations as well as senior adults with the goal of providing practical knowledge and tools for social workers to use to recognize and solve the problem.

Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to define food security.
2. Participants will understand the some of causes and effects of food insecurity among college students and senior citizens
3. Participants will be provided with some tools currently be utilized to combat food insecurity both locally and nationally
4. Participants will be challenged to identify other practical and effective solutions to combating food insecurity.

Breakout Session IV

Clinical Ethics (Continued)

Challenging Racism: Recognizing Racism in Clinical Practice

Donna Mitchell, LMSW

Covenant Counseling & Consultation Services, LLC.

Macro Ethics (Continued)

When Personal Values Conflict With Professional Ethics:

Ethical Dilemmas and Cultural Sensitivity in Working with LGBTQ Populations

Paula Foster, LCSW, Executive Director, TCSW

Special Social Work Student Session

From College to Career: From Field to Practice – Advocacy Matters – What does it look like?

Darris Upton, MSSW – Knox County Mayor's Office

Susan Bryant-Nelson, MSSW – UT College of Social Work

Karen Latus, MSSW – ESL Teacher, Knox County Schools

Description: This is a special session for students who wish to explore ways to use social work advocacy in positions OTHER than a traditional social work career. We will explore ways that field practice, advocacy as a student, and involvement in groups like TCSW can launch a career upon graduation and give practitioners a platform from which to operate in various settings.