

Counselors

Jayde Brejc (she, her, hers)
Graduate Intern

**Availability: Monday 9:00am – 5:00pm; Tuesday 9:00am – 1:00pm;
Wednesday 9:00am – 5:00pm**

Jayde is pursuing her M.S. in Clinical Psychology at Benedictine University. She graduated cum laude from St. Ambrose University in Davenport, IA with a B.A. in Psychology. Jayde's counseling style is to utilize client-centered techniques that are focused on each unique individual and their experience. She values the therapeutic alliance and working with client to collaborate on treatment goals. She focuses on providing a safe space for clients along with being open, accepting, and empathetic towards your personal challenges. Jayde's goal is to help students with daily stress and life transitions. She has an interest in incorporating elements of art therapy, mindfulness, stress management, and acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT). Jayde strives to be culturally competent for her clients of all backgrounds and sexual orientations (LGBTQIA+ friendly).



Yara Daoud
Graduate Intern

Availability: Monday 9:00am – 5:00pm; Wednesday 12:00pm – 5:00pm; Friday 9:00am – 4:00pm

Yara Daoud is completing her M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Adler University. Yara works to create a safe and nurturing environment with her clients to foster holistic healing. She's passionate about working collaboratively to address trauma, depression, anxiety, relational issues, racial and ethnic concerns, and to overall aid in the process of fostering self- growth. Yara takes an eclectic approach to therapy based on client's needs. Outside of therapy, Yara is heavily involved in social justice and community organizing, a writer, poet, and artist who believes in the spiritual aspect of self-discovery and holistic healing.



Allison Deckinga
Graduate Intern

Availability: Monday & Wednesday 9:00am – 5:00pm; Thursday 9:00am – 1:00pm

Allison Deckinga is currently pursuing her M.S. in Clinical Psychology at Benedictine University. Allison graduated from North Central College with a B.A. in Psychology and a minor in French. She is interning at the Benedictine Counseling Center for the 2020-2021 school year. Allison enjoys working with young adults and is looking forward to her time in the counseling center. Allison has had experience working in the mental health field since 2015 upon graduating from North Central College; she has worked in a residential treatment center and is currently working in a psychiatric hospital setting. Allison has gained skills in empathetic listening, practicing dialectical behavioral therapy, and providing a safe environment for clients. Allison uses client centered therapy as a base for working with clients and incorporates other therapeutic techniques such as cognitive behavioral therapy. She enjoys working with clients from all backgrounds of race, spirituality or religion, sexuality, gender, and ethnicity.



Rachel Maluta
Graduate Intern

Availability: Tuesday 9:00am – 5:00pm; Thursday 9:00am – 5:00pm; Friday 9:00am – 1:00pm

I am pursuing my M.A. in Counseling with a specialization in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Adler University. I view therapy as a collaborative experience and seek to make my clients feel comfortable, hopeful, and truly understood. I am passionate about working with young adults, helping them discover self-awareness, transition through life's changes, and build healthy coping skills. I use a client-centered therapeutic approach to facilitate change and personal growth. I also incorporate a variety of other therapeutic methodologies to best suit the client's needs. These include cognitive behavioral therapy, dialectical behavior therapy, mindfulness, strengths-based therapy and narrative. I strive to be culturally competent and an advocate for my clients of all backgrounds.



Liz Sodaro, M.S., L.P.C. (she, her, hers)
Interim Assistant Director

Availability: Monday – Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm

Liz Sodaro earned her M.S. in Clinical Psychology from Benedictine University. She completed her clinical internship at the Counseling Center and is passionate about supporting college students during their personal journeys of transition, growth, and identity building. Liz engages clients in an empathetic, accepting, and open manner and strives to create a safe space for clients to unpack their personal challenges and be heard. She uses a student-centered therapeutic approach focused on each person's unique life experience. Liz draws from techniques in D.B.T., cognitive behavioral therapy, strengths-focused therapy, existential therapy, and mindfulness to collaborate with clients on what fits best for their needs and goals. She is focused on providing culturally competent care and embraces working with clients of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, and faiths. Her areas of focus are depression, anxiety, life transitions, self-esteem, relationship and family challenges, multicultural issues, career path stress, grief and loss, and trauma. Liz looks forward to learning about your journey and collaborating on your goals.

Volunteer Counselors



Peggy Tomchek, M.S., L.P.C.
Volunteer Counselor

Availability: Ask for scheduling options

Connection is one of the most important things that helps us in life. It fuels authenticity in our relationships and allows us to be who we really are with other people. Therapy is a place to explore our connections. In order to be our best selves, we need meaningful connections with others who can meet us where we are. I will meet you where you are in a space where there is freedom to explore whatever life is throwing your way. You are the expert of your life. I am prepared to walk your path with you and to help identify places where you can make positive change that will help you achieve your goals. I am an unbiased, non-judgmental support and utilize my own humanity, knowledge of psychological systems and approaches to help you make change. I especially want to help those who feel marginalized and unimportant in their lives and in the world. I work with many mental health issues including depression, anxiety, ADHD, transition, adolescent and teen issues, living with long term illness, stress management, and life issues. I practice from a family systems perspective, which focuses on connection and relationships. I work with all people of all genders, sexual orientations, races and cultures. I earned my M.S. in Clinical Psychology from Benedictine University.



**Anthony Q. Ward, Jr., M.S., L.C.P.C.
Volunteer Counselor**

Availability: Ask for scheduling options

I view counseling and therapy as a conversation. It is my goal to help my clients identify and define what they value in life. Most negative emotions that we experience in life are due to frustrated efforts at achieving the things we value. Often, we stand in the way of our own happiness due to unexamined expectations. I believe progress comes through increased awareness and understanding of one's core beliefs about self, others, and the world. I purpose to serve as a sounding board to this growth in awareness and understanding. I have great experience in helping my clients with issues that face families, teens, couples, athletes, and people struggling with addiction. I am trained in cognitive-behavioral techniques, client-centered therapy, D.B.T. and have experience working with complex trauma. I see the counseling relationship as a sacred space and am honored to be a part of my client's writing of their life's story.



**Sherri S. Wick, M.S., L.P.C., N.C.C.
Volunteer Counselor**

Availability: Ask for scheduling options

My beliefs, values and understanding is that all humans are made whole because we were created in God's own image. I am passionate about creating a safe, supportive and transformative space for people to develop techniques to assist them with navigating in healthy ways through this journey called life. I have a unique ability to build rapport with all people and have a niche for working with emerging adults, adults and older adults. I love working with all women and have a special place in my heart for women of color. My daily mission is to bring light to help individuals obtain peace from within. My counseling style is to utilize the best techniques that will work for each individual. I utilize many approaches including: client-centered, faith-based, existential, strengths-based, solution-focused, multicultural, career counseling and trauma informed. I wholeheartedly believe that we are called to be a light for others, but to do that we have to establish a healthy way of thinking, being and living. I look forward to working with you!

****We cannot guarantee that Counseling Center Volunteers will always be available due to their schedules and availability. Please inquire when scheduling an appointment.***

Special Programming



**Fanisha Calvert, M.S., M.S.W.
Virtual Programming Volunteer**

Fanisha Calvert completed her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Western Illinois University and then her dual Master's degree in Child Development from Erickson Institute and a Master's degree in Social Work from Loyola University. She has worked in the social service field for over ten years and is highly empathic to families struggles and committed to helping individuals seek creative resolutions to complex social situations. Fanisha has an immense interest in aiding individuals to reach their full potential; physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. Her interest and specialties include serving clients with trauma, grief and loss, depression, anxiety, behavioral concerns, and stress and anger management. Fanisha uses a blend of Cognitive Behavioral, Solution Focused, Person Centered, Play Therapy, Behavioral Modification, Psycho-Education and Crisis Interventions modalities with individuals age three and up. She uses a strength based holistic approach and has an immense passion for counseling, advocating, coordinating and providing client and community education.



**Jocelyn Fernandez Lang, M.S.
Virtual Programming Volunteer**

Jocelyn Fernandez Lang received her M.S. in Clinical Psychology from Benedictine University in 2018 and is L.P.C. eligible. Currently she is the Intake Specialist at Family Counseling Service of Aurora where she meets new clients to conduct the evaluation, diagnostics, and recommendations for services. Jocelyn is fully bilingual in Spanish and English and specializes in multicultural counseling, youth and adolescent services, and crisis intervention.

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