

C&R NEWS

Counseling & Rehabilitation Program Newsletter

(Red brick pathways leading to a metal and brick gate. Behind the gate lie trees and a red brick building)

Clinic for Counseling and Assessment Supports Mental Health at Orangeburg Mental Health Day Event

The Clinic for Counseling and Assessment (CCA) proudly participated in the 3rd Annual Mental Health Awareness Day event held in Orangeburg, South Carolina. Representatives from CCA joined community members, mental health professionals, advocates, and local organizations in promoting mental health awareness, education, and support throughout the region.



Cassandra McClain seated at a table under a garnet and black Gamecock tent

The event provided an opportunity to engage with the community, share valuable mental health resources, and encourage open conversations surrounding emotional wellness and access to care. Dr. Toriello and Cassandra connected with attendees to discuss the importance of mental health services and the continued effort to reduce stigma surrounding mental health.

CCA remains committed to supporting the mental and emotional well-being of the Orangeburg community and surrounding areas through compassionate counseling, assessment services, and community outreach initiatives. Participation in events like Mental Health Awareness Day reflects CCA's ongoing dedication to advocacy, education, and accessible mental health care for all.

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(Students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

Save the Date

Student Spotlight: Emily Kallis Wins Discover USC Session

August 14th, 2026:
New and Returning Student Orientation Event

Discover USC marked 10 years of research, scholarship, creativity and leadership with its 2026 event, held at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center on Friday, April 24, 2026 and for the third year running, the Counseling and Rehabilitation Program was represented by several students, **Emily Kallis, Leah Limbaugh and Ali Salisbury.**

August 18th, 2026:
First Day of Fall '26 Classes

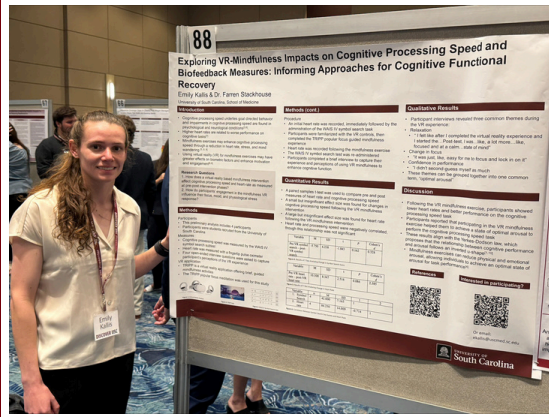
Discover USC grows in attendance and impact yearly, hosting an enriching day for more than 1,000 undergraduate and graduate, medical scholar and postdoc presenters who shared their projects throughout the morning and afternoon sessions.

October 10th, 2026:
Learning Community Saturday Event

For graduate students, there were 27 total poster sections at Discover USC 2026 and over 1000 presentations in total, and we'd like to extend a special congratulations to Counseling and Rehabilitation student, **Emily Kallis**, whose presentation on Exploring VR-Mindfulness Impacts on Cognitive Processing Speed and Biofeedback Measures took home the Graduate Student Award for her entire section!

The program looks forward to sponsoring student attendance at next year's Discover USC event in 2027.

CHECK OUT OUR SOCIALS!



Emily Kallis stands with her research poster.



Ali Salisbury and Leah Limbaugh stand with their research poster.

Please join us in congratulating them on their amazing work!!!



(students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

Highlighting Hope: USC’s Counseling and Rehabilitation Program Celebrates Mental Health Awareness Month

This May, in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, USC’s Counseling and Rehabilitation Program proudly joins with national partners to celebrate the strength, resilience, and courage of individuals on their mental health journeys.

Mental Health Awareness Month is not only a time to honor personal experiences but also an opportunity to reduce stigma, promote open dialogue, and emphasize the critical need for accessible mental health care—especially in underserved communities.



A green ribbon to represent Mental Health Awareness month.

Research-Inspired Tips for Advocating and Thriving this May:

- 1. Normalize the Conversation:** According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), over 1 in 5 adults in the U.S. experience mental illness each year. Talking openly about mental health reduces stigma and creates space for support and understanding.
- 2. Share Your Story (Safely):** Research from Corrigan et al. shows that hearing stories of lived experience helps challenge negative stereotypes. You never know who you might help by speaking your truth.
- 3. Prioritize Mental Wellness Daily:** Small habits matter—whether it’s journaling, moving your body, reaching out to a friend, or practicing mindfulness. Studies show daily mental health practices improve mood and decrease stress over time (APA, 2020).
- 4. Reconnect with Your Purpose:** Helping others gives meaning to our own struggles. Consider mentoring, volunteering, or simply checking in on someone you care about. Collective resilience builds stronger communities.

Together, we are not just raising awareness, but we are building a culture of compassion and empowering others to thrive.



(students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

Behind the Scenes of Spring '26 Graduation

The Counseling and Rehabilitation Program is thrilled to announce the graduation of nine outstanding students **Amanda Allen, Laura Best, Miyoshi Anderson, Skylar Linder, Madison Lovejoy, Allie Ledbetter, Aisha Robinson, David Tussey and Aileen Welch** from the program during the spring '26 semester as well as the anticipated graduation of Counseling and Rehabilitation student, **Abigail Johnson** who participated in the ceremony early. These individuals have demonstrated exceptional readiness and dedication as they move toward the next step in their professional careers.



Graduates pose for a photo in front of a red background.



Student shows off decorated graduation cap.



Please join us in celebrating our Spring '26 Graduating Class!!!



Graduates wait to cross the stage.

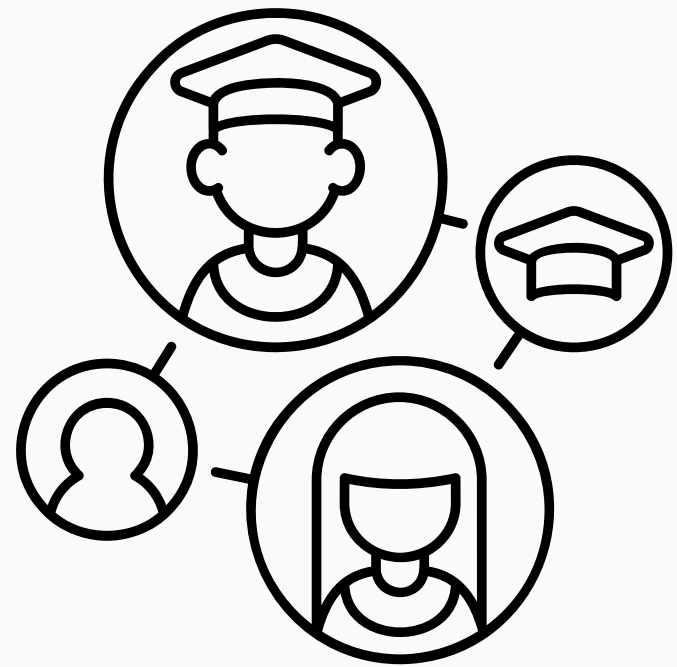


(students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

Counseling and Rehabilitation Alumni Mentorship Program Update

The University of South Carolina Counseling and Rehabilitation Program is excited to announce an update on the development of a new voluntary alumni mentoring initiative designed to strengthen connections between current students and program graduates.

The Alumni Mentorship Program connects counseling and rehabilitation alumni with current students seeking professional guidance, support, and mentorship as they navigate graduate training and early career development. Areas of mentorship may include career exploration, clinical and professional development, licensure preparation, navigating field experiences, work-life balance, and transitioning into professional counseling roles.



A graphic depicting alumni support.

After sending out the call for available alumni mentors to our learning community, we were quickly contacted by twenty two volunteers with knowledge and expertise in a wide range of skills in the field of counseling. This diverse group of highly qualified mentors is able to pass on knowledge and experience to students seeking anything from study tips for their final exams and preparing for licensure to niche skills like working with marginalized populations.

We are pleased to announce that students of the C&R Program are now able to access the contact information for these mentors at any time by navigating to the “Professional Development” tab in [Blackboard](#) found under the “Rehabilitation Learning Community” organization. Students are encouraged to reach out to the listed mentors directly to set up a time for a mentorship session.

The Counseling and Rehabilitation Program extends its appreciation to the alumni who have taken on the role of mentor and to the Counseling and Rehabilitation Student Association for helping bring the idea to life in support of future counselors and rehabilitation professionals.

If you are interested in participating as a mentor, please complete this brief [Google Form](#).

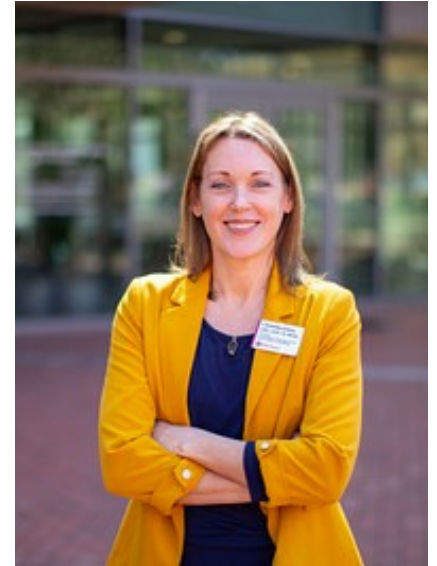
University of South Carolina Floyd School of Medicine Master of Arts In Counseling and Rehabilitation Program is pleased to offer

Neurodivergence 101

It seems that everywhere you look, there is talk about neurodivergence. All of a sudden, we are seeing a rise in diagnosed ADHD and Autism Spectrum Disorder. What does it mean to be neurodivergent? What does it mean to be neurospicy? What do healthcare professionals need to know in order to treat members of this population? This presentation will explore these diagnoses and ways in which this population struggle in unique ways. Participants will learn how to spot signs of neurodivergent burnout, ways to support these individuals, and resources to share as helping professionals.

Upon completion:

- Participants will gain an understanding of what diagnoses fall under the neurodivergent umbrella
- Participants will be able to identify ways that neurodivergent individuals can experience burnout
- Participants will gain tools and resources to better serve the neurodivergent population



**Christina K. Jones,
LPC, LPC/S, MAC**

When: June 16, 2026 / 12:00pm-1:00pm Eastern Time

Where: A virtual log on link will be sent to all who RSVP for the program one day prior to the event.

[Click here to register](#). Registration closes on June 15th at 11:00am. In order to receive CE credits for program attendance, participants must sign in using the provided link during the presentation, stay for the entire duration of the presentation and complete a virtual program evaluation following the presentation. No partial credit is offered for this event.



Continuing Education Credit Available: 1 NBCC credit hour

University of South Carolina School of Medicine Master of Arts in Counseling and Rehabilitation Program has been approved by NBCC as an Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 3089. Programs that do not qualify for NBCC credit are clearly identified. University of South Carolina School of Medicine Master of Arts in Counseling and Rehabilitation Program is solely responsible for all aspects of the program.

If you need special accommodations or have questions, please contact us.

rehab@uscmed.sc.edu or (803) 216-3690

**6311 Garners Ferry Road, Columbia, South Carolina 29209
SC.edu**



(students walking across a field of green grass with trees and a stone statue standing in the middle of the field)

Blackboard: Did You Know?

Don't forget to check out the new Alumni mentorship feature on blackboard! Students of the C&R Program are now able to access the contact information of select alumni at any time by navigating to the "Professional Development" tab in Blackboard, found under the "Rehabilitation Learning Community" organization. Students are encouraged to reach out to the listed mentors directly to set up a time for a mentorship session.



Blackboard

Upon opening the list of alumni, you will see each previous students' contact information and typical availability, as well as their current role, credentials, and practice focus. This is a great and efficient way to make real-world connections in the field, learn more about what to expect as a future counselor, and receive guidance from individuals who have gone through the program as well as the practicum and internship process.

Wellness Corner

The 4-7-8 breathing technique is a simple yet powerful practice to reduce stress and promote relaxation. To do it: inhale through your nose for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 7 seconds, and exhale slowly through your mouth for 8 seconds. Repeat this cycle up to four times. This method helps calm the nervous system, lower anxiety, and improve sleep by encouraging deep, mindful breathing.



A graphic depicting calm breathing.

Writing Tip: Citing Multiple Authors

APA writing typically involves properly citing sources with multiple authors in-text according to APA 7th edition. For a work with two authors, always include both last names joined by an ampersand in parentheses or "and" in narrative citations: (Smith & Lee, 2021) or Smith and Lee (2021).

For a work with three or more authors, use only the first author's last name followed by "et al." and the publication year: (Jones et al., 2020).

This rule applies from the first citation onward, unlike APA 6th edition, which required listing all authors on the first mention. Ensuring accuracy here improves readability and aligns your work with current APA standards. (Source: <https://owl.purdue.edu>)



Miss Nova Kane smiles for the camera.

Pet of the Month

Meet our Pet(s) of the Month, Miss Nova Kane! Also known as Bean because she is like a little jumping bean who is full of energy!! Her favorite toy is her porcupine "Mango" and she loves a game of tug of war. She is a mommy's girl and never leaves my side :) - C&R Student, Tyla Jones

Show us your pet by filling out the form below:

[Pet of the Month](#)

Save the Date

Mandatory New and Returning Student
Orientation Event – Friday August 14th from 8:30am-
4:30pm

First day of Fall '26 classes – Tuesday, August 18th

Mandatory Learning Community Saturday Event
– Saturday, October 10th from 8:30am-4:30pm