



# Focus

## on NDCA

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## Presidential News

As I sit here writing this article, I am thinking about how much has changed in the past year of 2020. The North Dakota Counseling Association held its first virtual conference. Some of us experienced new partnerships and brought in new family members. In sum, our lives changed over the past 365 days. Of course, I could say some cliché quote like "The only constant in life is change," but instead, I am saying it has been challenging. I know I have had days where I just wanted things to be constant and predictable. Those of you that I have had the pleasure of getting to know probably know how much I like changing things up in my personal and professional lives. And yet, here I am saying how much I have craved consistency. Trust me; I am shocked too!

In trying to figure out what to write about for the Focus (sorry Jenise), I thought about the experiences of our members this year. You all have had so much change happen to you that you might not have wanted. I felt a pain in my heart for anyone who has lost someone this year or made difficult changes. Again, I could bring out a cliché quote about being strong through difficulties, but we all know those quotes. I am here to normalize that it

has been challenging and remind you that we are all in this together.

In the pain I feel, I also feel a strong sense of pride for counselors' work through the past year of changes and transitions. As cheesy as it sounds, I am hopeful for the upcoming year. I am hopeful that our profession continues its beautiful work of supporting our clients and students through changes and challenging times. I am hopeful that I will get to see everyone's beautiful faces at the 2022 NDCA Conference in February. I am hopeful that we all find what we are looking for and need in the year. I am very hopeful to see you all thrive in 2021.



*Becky Meidinger, Ph.D., NCC  
NDCA President*

## Bring on 2022!

2021 is almost over, and I am sure for some, 2022 will be a welcomed year.

A significant part of starting the new year is creating some new year's resolutions! I hope you have been considering what you want your resolutions to be and the changes you desire to see made in the coming year. As an organization, we are steadily looking into what changes we need to make and I am always looking at what changes I can make to better myself for NDCA and the members.

A couple different things come to mind regarding important changes coming this year that will be different from previous years.



Jenise Wilson  
Executive Director

- 1) Amy Geinert is working on creating an in-person (YIPPEE!) and on-demand conference for our members in 2022. We will be combing the best of both formats from the previous years and introducing the hybrid format for the first time.
- 2) NDMHCA decided to move their conference to the Fall and NDACES is having their first preconference! It will be via Zoom, AND will offer **six** supervision CE's.
- 3) NDCA will be putting on a workshop for two CE's on *Counselor Preparedness when Working with Survivors of Human Trafficking* in January 2022! The presenters will be myself and Stacy Schaffer through the 31:8 Project! We are excited for this additional learning opportunity! Be on the lookout for more information coming soon!

Of course, I am forever thankful for NDCA membership, executive council, and governing council. Thank you for your continued dedication to NDCA and if you have thoughts on how we can better the organization for 2022, please reach out! Happy Holidays!!

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## 2022 Conference

The 2022 Midwinter Conference is scheduled for February 13-15, 2022 at the Radisson Hotel in Bismarck, North Dakota. The theme for this year's conference is ***Counselor Strong***. You can register online at <https://ndcounseling.org/annual-conference-registration>. (If you prefer to print a registration form and mail it in, you will find the form at the same website.)

New this year - the conference fee covers access to both in-person and online sessions! In-person sessions will be held during the scheduled conference (February 13-15) and online sessions will be available March 1-May 31, 2022.

Whether you choose to attend the conference or not, be sure to renew your membership for the 2022 year (<https://ndcounseling.org/membership>). The

NDCA Council is working on some continuing education opportunities and networking opportunities for members, and we don't want you to miss out!



Amy Geinert  
NDCA President-Elect

## News from the Past President

Hello Strong North Dakota Counselors!!

I am so excited to have the opportunity to be in person with all of you at this year's conference! Camaraderie and collaboration are such a huge part of the conference, and important human aspect we all need. The 'Counselor Strong' theme of the conference is so fitting for all of us, as the issues we have been going through these last few years have not gotten any easier. I applaud each and every one of you as you continue showing up and flexing your counseling muscles to fit each unique student, client, and situation you have been presented with. The skill that makes us all so powerful is the ability to be resilient and tough when we need to be, and not give up.

### **We. Stay. Strong.**

It is the consistency of our profession and showing up for others, despite the barriers, to continuing doing what we do best...help others become strong as well. If you have not registered for the conference, do so today and save money on early bird rates...and invite someone to come with you! Thank you for standing up for your profession and keeping mental health and education issues on the front burner.

Thank you for being 'Counselor Strong'!



*Jada Hofland  
NDCA Past President*

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## Data, Data, Data

There's one thing that may be shared more on the internet right now than funny memes - data. It's everywhere. Numbers are scrolling across the bottom of your screen, shared in Instagram stories, and discussed in newspaper articles. Pick a topic and the data is almost instantaneously available to you – positive, negative, and in-between.

It can all be very overwhelming.

And I love data!

My co-workers tease me about my love of data. They even re-discovered one of my books about data in school counseling to read, "Data is a beautiful thing." It's fitting then that one of my favorite quotes of 2021 came from ASCA's School Counselor of the Year, who stated, "**Data is important. Behind the data is a story. The story is a student. Students are important.**" Here's some anecdotal data I'm mindful of in this moment: An overwhelming number of people are overwhelmed. As counselors, we are acutely aware of the rising mental health needs across North Dakota and the country. We see those numbers and know those

stories. Pause now and replace the word *student* in the above quote with *counselor*. The statement still rings true.

Another piece of data I'm mindful of is the number of people who are members of NDCA: There are some 400 or so individuals across the state who are valued members of our organization. Each of you have your own story. Each of you are important. There will undoubtedly be periods in our careers when self-care is of greater importance. Now is one of those times and we are ethically called by our professional organizations to engage in self-care. It protects us and it protects those we serve.

I hope amidst the busyness, that all 400 of you do the things that bring you joy and replenish your well. I'm going to keep reading my books about a data and look forward to snowy walks along the river!

*Chasity Odden Heide  
President-Elect-Elect*

## Hello from NDSCA

There has been a lot of things happening for NDSCA!

Since I know everyone is wondering, I'll start with this year's pre-conference details. There are still things to iron out, of course, but the plan is to meet in-person this February!! **We will be holding the pre-conference at Wachter Middle School on February 12<sup>th</sup> from 8am-4pm.** The keynote speaker will be Leonard Sax, covering 2 topics: Dealing with Difficult Parents and The Medicalization of Misbehavior. More information will be forthcoming on the listserv!

We have welcomed some new faces to serve on different committees to represent NDSCA; thus, enhancing the leadership opportunities for our membership! These newly appointed positions include Kaitlyn Kipp who is serving as a point of contact for our membership for B-HERO, Norma Theis who is serving on the advisory committee for the Purple Star Program, Katherine Nelson who has agreed to take on the role of NDSCA's point of contact for ASCA's Ethics Revision Project, and Christopher Potter, Shelly Ackerman, and Linda Dockter who are all serving on a committee to help develop virtual professional development opportunities for school counselors.

We have gotten a Membership Committee started on identifying ways to increase membership benefits. They provided a book study this fall which was a success. We also have a Legislative Action Committee in place that has been hitting the ground running on addressing some concerns of the school

counseling profession and as an organization are working on furthering the discussions about the need for a school counseling mentoring program and what that program might look like.

We had excellent representation the LDI conference in Las Vegas this past July. Myself, Liz Kappel, Terri Kroll, Angel Lindseth & Malarie Carlson all attended in person and Heidi Olson attended virtually. It was a nice surprise for NDSCA to receive recognition at the conference for having been part of the ASCA division for 55 years!

And finally, a fun addition made available in August, is an on-demand merchandise store for our members to purchase NDSCA clothing and a few other select items. Each item purchased benefits our NDSCA Scholarship Program in the hopes that we will be able to grow the program in the years ahead. The website to check out the merchandise store is

<https://ndsca.dakawards.com/>. Shipping costs are high right now, but we are hoping to see them come back down soon! We will be looking into options for members to order and pick up at conference so be on the lookout for that!

We really hope to see many of you at conference in a couple months!!!

*April Foth  
President*

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## NDACES Fall Updates

The North Dakota Association for Counselor Education and Supervision presents the NDACES Supervision Pre-Conference, a Virtual Event via Zoom! Earn **6 Supervision Credits** through NDBCE!

This Pre-Conference will be held Saturday, February 12th, from 9am – 4pm. You are invited to join us for topics including supervision of School Counselors, Community Mental Health Counselors, Masters-level Counselors-in-Training, and Post-Masters (Doctoral Student) Counselors. Content

sessions and panel discussions will feature local presenters with expertise in each area.

Register and find more information through NDCA (<https://ndcounseling.org/annual-conference-registration>)! Please see the flyer at the end of the FOCUS for more information!

*Jenna Hershberger  
NDACES President*

## NDMHCA Fall 2021 Updates

Greetings!!! NDMHCA had a great fall conference on rural ethics and the use of technology in supervision. We had the conference in person in Bismarck. There was great discussion, and the speaker was wonderful! For myself, it was wonderful to see colleagues and friends in person for the first time in almost two years!!! While it is great that we can use zoom and other technology to still have meetings and get CEs, it does not compare to seeing each other face to face. We will continue to have a conference in the fall each year to offer CEs in areas of need for mental health counselors.

NDMHCA has decided to offer a scholarship opportunity to newly licensed professionals (LAPCs) and graduate students!!! This scholarship award includes Flight, Hotel, and Full registration to the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) Conference in Las Vegas, NV on Wednesday, June 22, 2022-Friday, June 24, 2022. We will give the scholarship to one LAPC and one graduate student. The LAPC winner will be asked to do a 1-hour webinar for NDMHCA or present at the NDCA conference. The Graduate Student winner will be asked to do a poster presentation or present at the NDCA conference or do a 1-hour webinar. All you must do to enter is answer an essay question, and the NDMHCA board will decide who will win the scholarships. The deadline to enter is March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Please enter yourself if you qualify or spread the word to LAPCs and Graduate Students. The award form is located on [www.ndmhca.org](http://www.ndmhca.org), or on the ND Mental Health Counselors Association Facebook page (also attached to the end of this FOCUS). If you have questions, you can email [contactndmhca@gmail.com](mailto:contactndmhca@gmail.com).

We have decided to have monthly prize drawings for members. Possible prizes include Amazon Gift Cards, membership costs, or discounts on conference registration fees. We are looking forward to the NDCA conference and the upcoming year!!!

*Lory Hellman*  
NDMHCA President

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## NDCA Graduate Scholarship

The NDCA Graduate Scholarship Application was sent to counseling program advisors at NDSU, University of Jamestown, University of Mary, UND, and MSU-M to make available to students. The deadline for application submission was November 10, 2021. Each student who submitted an application will be notified by phone or email by the end of December in regard to the Scholarship Committee's decision on the awarding of the scholarship. This year's scholarship committee readers include: Haley Jeannotte from Williston High School, Holly Kersten from Max Public Schools, and Erin Klingenberg from Valley City State University. If you are interested in joining our committee, please email me at [mmickelson280@mygfschools.org](mailto:mmickelson280@mygfschools.org) or call me at 701-746-2429. On behalf of NDCA, best wishes to all of our graduate students in their educational pursuits.

*Melissa Mickelson*  
Grad Scholarship Chair

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## 2022 Silent Auction

Let's make this the best silent auction to date!!

Who: All NDCA Members

What: Silent Auction

When: Midwinter Counseling Conference February 13-15, 2022

Where: Radisson Hotel Bismarck, ND

Why: To support our graduate students as money raised goes into scholarship funds that we award

If you have any questions or to confirm your support in providing to the silent auction, please contact Melissa Mickelson, Grad Scholarship Chair at [mmickelson280@mygfschools.org](mailto:mmickelson280@mygfschools.org)

Thank you in advance ☺

## Updates from NDCDA

The North Dakota Career Development Association held its annual fall business meeting and social during the CTE Professional Development Conference in Bismarck on August 10th. The North Dakota Career Development Association is composed of school counselors, career advisors, education, and industry leaders who are committed to helping students learn about themselves and find a career that aligns with their passion.

During the business meeting, the NDCDA board reported on the success of their summer book study, “What School Could Be” by Ted Dintersmith with 12 participants receiving credit through UND. A discussion on the start-up of regularly scheduled meetings for career development counselors through Microsoft Teams was discussed as well to provide for a time of mentorship and collaboration. Stay tuned for more information to be forth-coming on that in the future. Updates on legislative changes, the Career Resource Network, and representative reports from various organizations were given as well.

The next NDCDA meeting will be taking place at NDCA Annual Conference in Bismarck February 13-15, 2022 at the Radisson Hotel in Bismarck, ND.

*Kellie Meyer*  
NDCDA President

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## Academic, CTE, and ND Scholarship Update

On Monday, April 19, Governor Burgum signed [SB 2289](#), which re-defines the requirements for the North Dakota Academic and CTE Scholarships. The bill establishes the “North Dakota Scholarship” which will eventually replace the current Academic and CTE Scholarships. The requirements for the North Dakota Scholarship are written in a way to align with the Choice Ready requirements, but go above and beyond what is required for Choice Ready. Students that qualify for the North Dakota Scholarship will also be considered Choice Ready, but not all students that are Choice Ready will qualify for the scholarship.

The purpose for the creation of the North Dakota Scholarship and the alignment to the Choice Ready requirements is to base our state scholarship requirements on one of the key elements of the North Dakota K-12 Strategic Vision of having students graduate Choice Ready. The goal of aligning scholarship requirements to Choice Ready is for students to plan for meeting the scholarship requirements, while at the same time increasing the likelihood that they will graduate Choice Ready. The North Dakota Scholarship keeps the ACT score requirement at 24, keeps the WorkKeys score requirement at 5 for each of the three tests, and keeps the GPA requirement at 3.0.

The new North Dakota Scholarship will be implemented over the course of the next three years. Students graduating in 2021 will be evaluated using the requirements of the current Academic and CTE Scholarships. Students graduating in 2022, 2023, and 2024 will be able to use EITHER the current Academic/CTE Scholarship Requirements or the new North Dakota Scholarship requirements. The current Academic and CTE Scholarships will sunset after the class of 2024 graduates, and starting with the graduating class of 2025, students will ONLY be able to qualify using the new North Dakota Scholarship requirements. As is currently the case with the Academic/CTE Scholarships, students may only receive ONE of these scholarships for a maximum total of \$6000.

Please see the chart for a visual of the requirements for the new [North Dakota Scholarship](#). In order to qualify for the North Dakota Scholarship, students would need to meet four out of the eight essential skills defined on the Choice Ready chart, and then meet the requirements of two of three components (Post-secondary Ready, Workforce Ready, and Military Ready) just as they would with Choice Ready. These three components for the North Dakota Scholarship are more rigorous than they are for Choice Ready.

We are planning to create something online similar to eTranscript to give schools and parents a way to track scholarship eligibility online for students. We will keep you posted on that! Right now, our plan is to pull information

from the Choice Ready as well as eTranscript/PowerSchool for the North Dakota Scholarship, so having the Choice Ready Report completed will be important as it may impact scholarship eligibility.

Applications for the Academic, CTE, and North Dakota Scholarships will open on Monday, January 3, and will remain open until Friday, June 3. Please send WorkKeys scores to NDDPI as you have in the past.

Please contact [Jim Upgren](#) at 701-328-2244 with questions related to the Academic, CTE, or North Dakota Scholarship.

*Jim Upgren*  
NDDPI

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## NDCA Awards!

### 2022 Awards:

The NDCA award nomination deadline is rapidly approaching! We love honoring those who excel in their field and we have received *no* nominations so far! Is there someone you admire for their capabilities, techniques, ideas, practices, or approaches? Please show them by nominating them for a NDCA award!

### Nomination Information:

Is there someone you admire for their techniques, ideas, practices, capabilities, or approaches? Please show them by nominating them for a NDCA award! We love honoring those who excel in their field!

You can submit your nomination at any time; however, the deadline to submit nominations is **November 30<sup>th</sup>**! Nomination criteria and forms can be found at [ndcounseling.org](http://ndcounseling.org) → Awards. Please submit award nominations to: Rebecca Ringham, Minot State University, Registrar's Office, 500 University Ave W, Minot, ND 58707 / Fax: 701-858-3386 /Email: [rebecca.ringham@minotstateu.edu](mailto:rebecca.ringham@minotstateu.edu)

**Glenn Dolan Award** – An individual who has demonstrated able leadership, excellent rapport and service to the community, outstanding contributions to their organization

**Innovations Award** – An individual who has made innovative contributions in research or published articles in the field of counseling

**Friend of Counseling Award** – An individual who has demonstrated support for counseling in the state of North Dakota through his/her profession

**Outstanding New Professional Award** – An individual who has developed an outstanding program and demonstrates exceptional interpersonal skills

**Member Emeritus Award** – for NDCA members who have retired

Please submit award nominations by *November 30, 2021* to: Rebecca Ringham, Minot State University, Registrar's Office, 500 University Ave W, Minot, ND 58707, or Fax: 701-858-3386, or Email: [rebecca.ringham@minotstateu.edu](mailto:rebecca.ringham@minotstateu.edu)

If you are interested in helping select winners from the nominees submitted, please let us know! We are building the Awards Committee and would be delighted to include you as a member. If interested, email Rebecca Ringham – Awards Chair.

*Rebecca Ringham, M.S*  
Awards Committee Chair

## Ethical Discussion on Receiving Gifts

Perhaps you have found yourself receiving the offer of gifts more over the last 18+ months following the pandemic. We have heard a lot about how gratitude is so important in our personal and professional lives. This gratitude giving has filtered on our clients as well. Therefore, there have been more questions about the ethical behavior in accepting or rejecting “gifts”. This condensed article from the Ethics section of ACA website summarizes the dilemma quite well.

The story included in the ACA article played out like this. *Sometime back, a counselor in-training came to their supervisor with a concern about gift giving. It seems a couple he had been working with gave him a \$50 gift card as a token of appreciation for helping them through some tough times. The counselor-in-training was aware of the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics standard that addresses receiving gifts (Standard A.10.f).*

**A.10.f. Receiving Gifts:** Counselors understand the challenges of accepting gifts from clients and recognize that in some cultures, small gifts are a token of respect and gratitude. When determining whether to accept a gift from clients, counselors take into account the therapeutic relationship, the monetary value of the gift, the client’s motivation for giving the gift, and the counselor’s motivation for wanting to accept or decline the gift.

Given the circumstances, they worked through a generic ethical decision-making process and decided it was best for him to offer his heartfelt thanks but to tell the clients he could not accept their gift. However, the couple refused to take the gift card back. The counselor-in-training thus accepted the card as a gift for the clinic, and it was used to benefit other clients. The question remains to how a counselor responds to a client request or action when that request or action can be perceived either on one hand harmless or on the other hand as being on the edge of violating a relationship boundary. Our actions as counselors can have powerful consequences that either enhance or damage the therapeutic relationship.

How does one maintain the professional relationship while acknowledging that counseling is a personal endeavor? This begins with the informed consent process. As the ethics code was developed and revised, many types of information that need to be explained with clients prior to the beginning of the counselor process are included (see Standard A.2.b.). Nowhere on that list of things is there mention of gift giving. It is important to share with the client that counseling has a uniquely personal dimension, especially for the client, and that the counselor is present as the professional. It is important to offer this information in a culturally sensitive way (Standard A.2.c.) and to assess the client’s expectation not just through the lens of the counselor’s culture or that of the majority of the people in the community, but from the client’s worldview and cultural norms. It is important to first

consider the motivation of the client. One place to begin examining that motivation is with the culture of the client.

One of the values of the counseling profession, as delineated in the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics preamble, is “honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach in support of the worth,

dignity, potential and uniqueness of people within their social and cultural contexts.” This is lived out in many ways in the counseling relationship. Some cultures perceive offering a small token or gift as an acknowledgment of respect. Processing with the client the meaning of the gift can be quite impactful for the counselor and consequential for the client. What might appear to be a simple token from a client can, in fact, have a significance far beyond the value of the gift. But what is a counselor to do when the counselor and the client share the same culture and the gift simply represents an expression of thanks? Once again, the need arises to discuss the meaning and significance of the gift for the client and to examine the nature of the counseling relationship. Additionally, the value of the gift must be considered.

Counselors should manage their actions on a case-by-case basis and document their actions regardless of the decision reached. It becomes your job as the professional counselor to assess the context of the situation and to determine an appropriate course of action. With certain exceptions, we no longer live in a world in which we maintain rigid boundaries as professional counselors for fear of contaminating the therapeutic relationship. We can extend boundaries when appropriate with the proper precautions and after discussing it with the client. These extensions may, in fact, enhance the therapeutic relationship, build closer rapport and lead to greater healing. When necessary, we can choose to maintain a boundary with a client. Regardless of the action taken, documentation of the discussion and decision must be made in the case file.

*Erin Klingenberg, Ph.D., LPCC  
Ethics Chair*

#### **Resource:**

**Boundaries and the little things that matter**—by Perry C. Francis

Excerpts from ACA website: [https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/ethics/ethics-columns/ethics\\_august\\_2019\\_small-boundaries.pdf?sfvrsn=b0fe572c\\_2](https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/ethics/ethics-columns/ethics_august_2019_small-boundaries.pdf?sfvrsn=b0fe572c_2)

**North Dakota Mental Health Counselors Association Scholarship Application**

**This scholarship award includes Flight, Hotel, and Full registration to the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) Conference in Las Vegas, NV on Wednesday, June 22, 2022-Friday - June 24, 2022.**

**This scholarship will be awarded to:**

One License Associate Professional Counselor (LAPC)  
and  
One Mental Health Counseling Graduate Student

The LAPC winner will be asked to do a 1-hour webinar for NDMHCA or present at the NDCA conference.

The Graduate Student winner will be asked to do a poster presentation or present at the NDCA conference, or do a 1-hour webinar.

**The Application Deadline is March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022**

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number : \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a: Graduate Student \_\_\_\_\_ LAPC \_\_\_\_\_

**Essay Question: What is the importance of being involved in advocacy and leadership in the counseling profession? What is your intention for involvement in the North Dakota Mental Health Counselors Association and possibly being a board member?**

**Please submit application for this scholarship to:**

**North Dakota Mental Health Counseling Association**  
[contactndmhca@gmail.com](mailto:contactndmhca@gmail.com)

The North Dakota Association for Counselor Education and Supervision presents

# NDACES SUPERVISION PRE-CONFERENCE

A Virtual Event via Zoom

Earn 6 Supervision Credits through NDBCE!

**Saturday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 9am – 4pm**

You are invited to join us for topics including supervision of School Counselors, Community Mental Health Counselors, Masters-level Counselors-in-Training, and Post-Masters (Doctoral Student) Counselors.

Content sessions and panel discussions will feature local presenters with expertise in each area.

Register through NDCA or at [ndaces.org/shop](https://ndaces.org/shop)

