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EMPOWERING EACH AND EVERY STUDENT

NOVEMBER 4-6, 2026 EMBASSY SUITES • CONCORD/CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Fall Conference

Wednesday, November 4, 2026 | 3:30 p.m.

PRE-CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SESSION

This session is open to
all conference attendees



Code-Switching for Authentic Connection

Diana Virgil

ABOUT THIS SESSION: Gain a deeper understanding of code-switching to effectively engage with your students in an authentic manner. Explore the various masks individuals wear, including generational gaps and cultural differences, and learn strategies to connect with students and colleagues. Diana Virgil, 2024 School Counselor of the Year, also delves into human growth and development, focusing on working with parents/guardians and diverse family structures to enhance your school counseling approach.

After attending the session, you will be able to:

- Develop a clear understanding of code-switching to authentically connect with students
- Explore the diverse masks individuals wear, including generational and cultural influences, to foster connections with students and colleagues
- Gain insights into human growth and development in the context of working with parents and diverse family structures

SPEAKER BIO: Virgil has been a school counselor since 2015 and works on a campus that serves 346 students in grades 9–12. She is the 17th person to receive the national recognition and the first from Alabama. Virgil received her bachelor's, master's and educational specialist degrees from Mississippi College and a doctorate degree from University of the Cumberland. She is an ASCA-Certified School Counselor, a National Certified School Counselor and a National Certified Counselor.

Many Daleville High School students are trailblazers in their families, aiming to be the first to graduate from high school. When Virgil was hired, she noticed a significant number of students weren't participating in dual-enrollment classes due to a lack of awareness, limited college aspirations, transportation challenges and financial constraints. Virgil promptly established a partnership with the local community college to boost student enrollment. A significant turning point came when the college received a grant to provide eligible students with free tuition and books for dual enrollment, revolutionizing the opportunities for students to earn both high school and college credit. To address transportation challenges, Virgil worked with the college to implement online courses and enlisted teachers to teach dual enrollment courses at the high school. Her approaches increased the number of students in dual-enrollment courses from four to more than 40 each semester. This year, the school is on the cusp of graduating its first student with a high school diploma and an associate degree in science, along with its first student with a mechatronics certification from the aviation college. As a result of Virgil's extensive collaboration and advocacy efforts, Daleville High School now offers dual-enrollment courses in science, English and math. For Virgil, the most rewarding part of her work as a school counselor is the opportunity to be a support system for her students.

Diana will also be presenting one breakout session.

Thursday, November 5, 2026 | 8:30 a.m.

OPENING KEYNOTE SESSION



At the Heart of It All: Empowering Each and Every Student Through Comprehensive School Counseling

Danielle Duarte

ABOUT THIS SESSION: At the heart of every thriving school community is a commitment to ensuring each and every student is seen, supported, and set up for success. But good intentions alone aren't enough. Lasting impact requires aligned systems, intentional practices, and a shared vision that fully integrates comprehensive school counseling.

This keynote weaves together practical stories, real-world successes, and lessons learned from the field to illustrate how comprehensive school counseling programs, grounded in data and delivered through a Multi-Tiered, Multi-Domain System of Supports (MTMDSS), can transform student outcomes.

Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their own programs, assessing strengths and identifying areas for growth, to consider how they can more effectively serve each and every student. They will also leave inspired and equipped with strategies to use data to better understand student needs, strengthen supports across tiers, and align school counseling efforts with site and district priorities.

The result: systems that move beyond access to ensure every student experiences meaningful, measurable impact. Because when school counselors lead with purpose and build with intention, every student can thrive.

SPEAKER BIO: Danielle Duarte, Ed.L.D. is passionate about supporting students' academic success, college and career readiness, and social-emotional development while using data to demonstrate the impact of comprehensive school counseling programs. A former school counselor, counseling grant project director, and adjunct faculty member, Danielle now serves as President of Hatching Results, where she leads national efforts to strengthen data-driven school counseling systems.

Earlier in her career, Danielle successfully wrote and directed a \$1.1 million Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program Grant for her district, hiring, training, and supporting school counselors in the development of comprehensive programs. Over the past decade, she has trained thousands of educators nationwide and co-authored two books on Tier 1 school counseling programming.

Danielle has served on the Board of Directors for the California Association of School Counselors, including as President, and on the Cal Aggie Alumni Association (UC Davis) Board. She is also a certified Harvard Data Wise Coach and AVID Staff Developer.

Featured in San Diego Magazine's "17 Big Ideas for 2017: Let's Implement More School Counseling Programs," Danielle believes every student can succeed with the right systems of support and well-trained school counselors leading the way.

November 6, 2026 | 8:30 a.m.

CLOSING KEYNOTE SESSION

Panel Discussion

ABOUT THIS SESSION: Coming soon.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2026

- 7:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. On-Site Conference Registration and Information Desk Open
- 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. NCSCA Delegate Assembly
- 10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Exhibitors Setup
- 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Leadership Day Meeting
- 12:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Pre-Conference Sessions
- 1:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Exhibits Open
- 1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Snack Break with Exhibitors
- 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Pre-Conference General Session with Keynote Speaker – Diana Virgil
(Open to all conference attendees)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2026

- 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. On-Site Conference Registration and Information Desk Open
- 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Exhibits Open
- 7:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Silent Auction
- 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Opening Session Kick Off: Welcome, Introduction, Regional Roll Call, Updates & Awards with Keynote Speaker – Danielle Duarte
- 10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Break with Exhibitors
- 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Program Session 1
- 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Boxed Lunches (Name Badge Required)
- 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Past Presidents Luncheon
- 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Graduate Student Luncheon and Panel
- 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Program Session 2
- 1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Break with Exhibitors
- 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Graduate Student Poster Sessions
- 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Program Session 3
- 3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Break with Exhibitors
- 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Program Session 4
- 4:40 p.m. – 5:10 p.m. Regional Meetings
- 5:10 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Celebration Reception & Silent Auction

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2026

- 6:30 a.m. – 7:30 a.m. Fun Run/Walk
- 7:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. On-Site Conference Registration and Information Desk Open
- 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Coffee Service Only
- 8:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Exhibits Open
- 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Closing Keynote Session – Panel Discussion
- 9:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Transition Break
- 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Program Session 5
- 10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Break with Exhibitors – Last Chance!
- 11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Program Session 6

Wednesday, November 4, 2026 | 12:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. (Lunch not included)

The Pre-Conference Learning Institute includes additional opportunities for more professional development and CEU contact hours. The sessions generally cover more in-depth information and allow more opportunity for discussion. **These sessions are not included in the conference registration fee.** Space is limited for all sessions. Interested participants are encouraged to register early.

All Pre-Conference sessions are being held at the same time, so you may only choose one session to attend.



1. AI Powered School Counseling

Hanna Mick

ABOUT THIS SESSION: Artificial intelligence is rapidly reshaping education—and school counseling is no exception. This keynote will explore the opportunities and challenges AI brings to our field, with a focus on how it can enhance student support, streamline counselor practices, and prepare young people for the future. Through real-world examples, practical tools, and thought-provoking discussions, attendees will gain a big-picture view of AI's role in school counseling today and where it's headed tomorrow.

SPEAKER BIO: Hanna Mick supports students and drives change in school counseling through dynamic leadership and innovative practices. Recognized for her contributions to school-based mental health, Mick was named 2024 Kansas School Counselor of the Year and was a finalist for ASCA School Counselor of the Year. As Dean of Elementary Counseling and Counselor Leader Coordinator for the Kansas State Department of Education, Mick leads impactful, data-driven initiatives that enhance school counseling across the state. She is known for her engaging, technology-infused lessons and use of AI and co-hosts “Kickin’ it with KSCA,” a podcast that empowers school counselors nationwide. A sought-after national presenter and keynote speaker, her energetic sessions are filled with practical strategies, project-based learning ideas, and ready-to-use tools, inspiring educators to rethink the possibilities of school counseling.

Hanna will also be presenting two breakout sessions.



2. Allyship, Access, and Advocacy: Supporting Students Impacted by Undocumentation

Alice Dolbow

ABOUT THIS SESSION: Each year, an estimated 2,000 undocumented students graduate from NC high schools. Additionally, almost 7% of all children in NC are U.S. Citizens with undocumented parents. How can our schools address the needs of students & families impacted by undocumented status? Participants in this pre-conference workshop will...

- Build shared language that supports students and families
- Learn about federal and state laws and policies from a legal expert
- Build empathy with those directly impacted by restrictive policies
- Identify actionable steps for working with immigrant-origin students and families

SPEAKER BIO: Alice Dolbow serves as a Training & Learning Advisor at LatinxEd. In this role, Alice collaborates with educators, school counselors, community partners, and higher education professionals to identify and dismantle structural barriers to educational access for Latine and immigrant-origin students. Through her work with LatinxEd and as a facilitator with UndocuCarolina, Alice advocates for undocumented youth in their pursuit of postsecondary opportunity. Previously, she worked as a high school physics teacher in GA and NC, and in undergraduate admissions at Duke. She earned her Bachelor of Science from Duke University and her Master of Arts in Education from Wake Forest University.



3. Legal Literacy and Ethical Practice in the Complex World of School Counseling

Carolyn Stone

ABOUT THIS SESSION: School counselors must negotiate the competing interests of the overregulated school environment, student's need for confidentiality and the legal rights of parents to be the guiding voice in their children lives. Updates on these competing interests will be discussed through 10 primary court rulings that guide legal work of counselors in schools. Legal rulings will be highlighted in areas such as sexually active students, bullying, academic advising, child abuse, educational records, sexual harassment, first amendment rights, and transgender youth. Particular attention will be given to the developing laws regarding off-campus cyber speech and other uses of social media that are difficult to address without offending the first amendment. Through case study and the application of federal, state, and judge made laws, participants will actively dialogue in a lively forum. The goal is to facilitate participants' legal literacy and provide guiding principles to support best ethical practice.

SPEAKER BIO: Carolyn Stone, Ed.D., is a Professor Emeritus of Counselor Education at the University of North Florida (UNF). Dr. Stone is a Past President of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), and in 2010 was presented the ASCA Lifetime Achievement Award. Prior to coming to UNF, Dr. Stone spent 22 years with Jacksonville, Florida's Public Schools as an elementary and high school counselor, middle school teacher and Supervisor of Guidance Services. She supervised 225 school counselors. Dr. Stone was ASCA's Ethics Chair from 2002 to 2022 and chaired the last four revisions of the ethical standards.



4. One Conversation: It Can Change Your Life

Deirdra Williams

ABOUT THIS SESSION: The need to inform and educate others about the role of the school counselor is ongoing. It's even more critical to be able to show relevance and share evidence of how students benefit from their school counseling programs. Prepare to engage in a lively discussion about local, district and state level advocacy and the many possibilities for success in this effort when done the right way.

Objectives:

- Learn how to have effective dialogue with stakeholders about school counseling
- Identify best practices for advocacy throughout the year
- Discover resources to support your advocacy efforts

SPEAKER BIO: Deirdra Williams is the Director of Programs and Advocacy for the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). Prior to joining the ASCA staff in 2021, she served high school students for over 20 years as a school counselor and Dean of Counseling and Student Services in one of the largest school districts in North Carolina. She is also a past Government Relations chair and as well as past President for her SCA.

Deirdra developed a passion for advocacy while serving as her SCA's Government Relations chair and President. Her advocacy work expands from local, to state to national work and now supporting advocacy efforts of state leaders. Deirdra also coordinates the Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP). She uses her own experience of earning RAMP, and providing trainings to school districts to further advocacy efforts by supporting school counselors seeking to earn RAMP for their school. Deirdra encourages use of the ASCA National Model for school counselor advocacy, especially at state and local levels.

Deirdra earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in French Language & Literature from NC State University, Master of Arts degree in School Counseling from NC Central University and a Master of Arts degree in School Administration from East Carolina University.



Save on your conference registration by becoming a member of the NCSCA!

Visit www.ncschoolcounselor.org BEFORE registering to get your member number.

REGISTRATION FORM (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

NAME (as it should appear on name badge) _____

ATTENDEE EMAIL (REQUIRED FOR CONFIRMATION) _____

I am a current NCSCA member. Yes No #: _____ (required for member rates)

JOB TITLE - (REQUIRED PLEASE) _____

ORGANIZATION/SCHOOL DISTRICT _____

WORK ADDRESS _____ COUNTY _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

CELL PHONE () _____ WORK PHONE() _____

I would like to volunteer at the conference. Yes No I am a first time attendee. Yes No

SPECIAL NEEDS _____

PLEASE ANSWER: IF YOU WERE TO PURCHASE A NCSCA T-SHIRT AT THE CONFERENCE, WHICH STYLE WOULD YOU PREFER? Short-sleeve Long-sleeve

A. MAIN Conference (Nov. 4-6)

- Early Registration (by Sept. 30)**
- Regular Registration (Oct. 1 - Nov. 2)**
- Onsite Registration (after Nov. 2)

Professional Member*	Non-Member	Grad Student/Retiree Member*
\$150	\$240	\$120
\$160	\$250	\$125
\$170	\$260	\$135

(A) Main Conference \$ _____

(B) Thursday Only \$ _____

The Main Conference includes access to the Pre-conference Keynote General Session on Wed. Nov. 5, 2026.

B. Thursday ONLY (Nov. 5)

- Early Registration (by Sept. 30)**
- Regular Registration (Oct. 1 - Nov. 2)**
- Onsite Registration after Nov. 2)

Professional Member*	Non-Member	Grad Student/Retiree Member*
\$115	\$210	\$90
\$125	\$220	\$100
\$135	\$230	\$110

(C) Pre-Conference \$ _____

C. Pre-Conference Learning Institute (Nov. 4)

(Additional fees required. Choose only ONE.)

- 1. AI Powered School Counseling – Mick
- 2. Allyship, Access, and Advocacy – Dolbow
- 3. Legal Literacy and Ethical Practice – Stone
- 4. One Conversation: It Can Change Your Life – Williams

Member*	Non-Member
\$45	\$100
\$45	\$100
\$45	\$100
\$45	\$100

Total Due
(A + B + C) \$ _____

* NCSCA membership must be good through November 7, 2026.

** To qualify for the early or regular registration rates, your registration form and payment (copy of your purchase order, check, or credit card) must be received or post-marked by the cutoff dates.

REGISTRATIONS CANNOT BE PROCESSED WITHOUT PAYMENT. PLEASE SEND PAYMENT AND REGISTRATION FORM(S) TOGETHER.

How and Where Do I Pay?

	WEBSITE	EMAIL	FAX	PHONE	MAIL
CREDIT CARD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PURCHASE ORDER		✓	✓		✓
CHECK					✓

PAYMENT METHOD

- PURCHASE ORDER** A COPY OF THE PURCHASE ORDER IS REQUIRED.
(PAYABLE TO NATIONAL CENTER FOR YOUTH ISSUES, P.O. BOX 22185, CHATTANOOGA, TN 37422-2185)
- CHECK ENCLOSED** (MADE PAYABLE TO NATIONAL CENTER FOR YOUTH ISSUES)
- CREDIT CARD** PERSONAL CORPORATE

CARD NO. _____ EXP. DATE _____ CID# _____

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CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE _____ EMAIL _____

PROCESSING FEE: There will be a \$35 service charge for all returned checks and declined credit cards.

CANCELLATION POLICY: If we are forced to cancel the NCSCA Conference because of a "force majeure" event, such as a government restriction on large gatherings that cover the intended size of the conference, then we will issue full refunds of the registrations. Otherwise, our normal cancellation policy will be upheld: Requests for refunds must be received in writing. No refund requests will be granted after October 4, 2026. There is a 20% processing fee for refunds requested prior to August 31, 2026 and a 50% processing fee for all refunds requested September 1 – October 4, 2026. Send cancellation requests to the NCSCA Treasurer at treasurer@ncschoolcounselor.org. The association is not responsible for and cannot give refunds due to problems beyond its control, such as weather and school closings.

On social distancing and other health and safety measures, the regulations/guidelines that apply to hotels and conference centers may change. The NCSCA Conference will conform to all necessary regulations/guidelines that are in place as of the date of the conference.

PLEASE NOTE: The attendee will receive a confirmation to the email address provided when their registration is processed (make sure to check Junk/Spam folders). The sponsors of the conference receive registrant contact information.

WEBSITE: www.ncyionline.org/ncscac

EMAIL: registrations@ncyi.org

FAX: 423-899-4547

PHONE: 866-318-6294

MAIL: National Center for Youth Issues

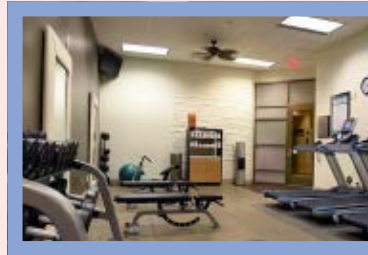
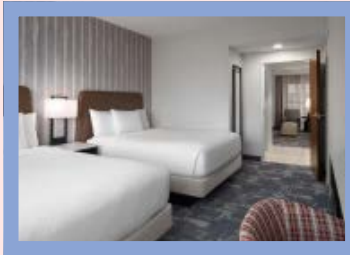
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Please make your check or purchase order payable to: **National Center for Youth Issues.**

A W-9 is available on the website.

WAIVER OF LIABILITY: The signed, in consideration of his/her registration of the 2026 NCSCA Fall Conference, releases, holds harmless and discharges the association, management staff and their agents, from any and all actions, claims and demands which may arise out of an accident, casualty or occurrence during said convention. Your signature above acknowledges acceptance of these provisions of registration for all those listed on this form.



Make hotel reservations early! Limited Availability!

Embassy Suites Resort and Convention Center

5400 John Q. Hammons Dr. NW
Concord, NC 28027

The Embassy Suites, the Conference's host hotel, has a conference rate of \$184 per night, plus tax, which remains valid for reservations made by October 13, 2026, while rooms are available. The price includes free made-to-order breakfast and a complimentary evening reception.



TO MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS

CALL: (704) 455-8200. Please be sure to mention the "Group Code 920."

REGISTER ONLINE: Visit www.ncyi.org/ncscac and scroll down to the "Accommodations" section. Click on the link to visit the hotel's on-line reservation system.

Come Work and Play!

In the evening, make sure you take time to relax and enjoy the surrounding area. Visit Concord Mills, just minutes away and in walking distance from the Embassy Suites! You can sit back and relax at the many restaurants at Concord Mills, such as Bonefish Grill, Dave and Busters and Outback Steakhouse, along with others. Enjoy shopping at the America Eagle, Nike Clearance Store, Banana Republic Factory Store, Sephora, Tommy Hilfiger, and many more! Concord Mills also has a 24-screen AMC movie theater, so you can finally watch that movie you have been wanting to see.

You can also visit Gibson Mill! Gibson Mill is a renovated mill that made a wide variety of fabrics a century ago. When you go today you can visit The Depot, an antique mall. Or visit one of their two craft breweries, Cabarrus Brewing Company or High Branch Brewing Company.



We hope this conference will educate and equip you to do your job well, and we also hope you will take advantage of the wonderful ways you can relax and be refreshed!