

Texas Rehabilitation Association

2019 TRA Annual Conference

July 17-19, 2019

Drury Plaza Hotel San Antonio Riverwalk
105 South St. Mary's St., San Antonio, TX



Dear Conference Attendees,

Welcome to the annual conference of the Texas Rehabilitation Association in the vibrant city of San Antonio! I am honored to personally welcome each of you to the 2019 conference. It's a time for metamorphosis for the field of vocational rehabilitation as we continue to evolve: Remaining always adaptable, motivated and responsive towards providing effective services to individuals with disabilities in the Lone Star state. Our organization is navigating a time of many changes within the field of rehabilitation in the state while also responding to changes during a time of larger nation-wide change. If we are to empower our customers to live the best life they can despite the setbacks they might encounter, we must emulate a river that maintains its flow through all the changing seasons despite barriers along the way: The world of vocational rehabilitation is a resilient one and we'll continue to meet and bring inspired people together in forums like this, to ensure TRA and its members remain at the cutting edge of expertise in the field.

I would like to take this opportunity to give you a brief update on where we are today. TRA is committed not only to providing professional development and networking opportunities for rehabilitation providers in the state, but also to advocating on behalf of the profession and Texans with disabilities at a national scale. Earlier this year in April, TRA representatives met with our elected representatives at Capitol Hill and provided professional perspectives on several policy items that directly impact the work we do and the customers we work with.

In keeping with the growth in needs and skills, I am excited to give you an idea of what you can expect and what we hope to achieve during the course of this conference. In this year's conference you will find sessions focused on a wide variety of topics relevant to our field. To highlight just a few- you can build your knowledge and skills in working with customers with legal issues, those with mental health disorders, those interested in self-employment, and customers transitioning under WIOA. In addition, you will find sessions focused on advocacy and (ever-sought-after) ethics. Talk about a well-rounded training conference!

The TRA Board is transforming the way we operate to continuously improve our ability to educate, empower, and advocate for individuals with disabilities. I consider myself privileged to work alongside passionate rehabilitation providers who have continued to meet the challenges of our expanding field and who have maintained excellence in service provision despite the ebbs and flows. We should all be very proud of where we are today and excited about where we are headed as we set sail on the rivers of change.

Before I close, I'd like to express my appreciation to each one of you for attending our conference and bringing your expertise to our gathering. You, as rehabilitation practitioners, educators, and students, have the vision, the knowledge, the passion and the experience to help TRA evolve its way into the future. You are truly our greatest asset today and tomorrow, and we could not accomplish what we do without your support and commitment. Throughout this conference, I ask you to stay engaged, keep us proactive and help us shape the future of the Texas Rehabilitation Association. My personal respect and heartfelt gratitude go out to all of you for all you do.



Rachita Sharma, PhD, CRC, LPC-S
President (2019) Texas Rehabilitation Association

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CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS FOR THE CONFERENCE

Credits issued at the conference will be: CRC, LPC, CVE and SW

Your session selections can earn up to 11.5 General hours. Within those 11.5 hours, your choices may earn you up to 3.0 hours in Ethics.

The most continuing education hours that can be earned at the Conference is a total of 11.5 hours.

You will be provided a master list with all the programs listed. Please immediately put your name on it. Keep this with you for all the sessions.

1. At each session, sign in and pick up an evaluation form.
2. At end of each presentation, turn in the evaluation of program.
3. Have the Facilitator stamp your master list, indicating you attended the entire program.
4. When leaving the conference, total your credit hours, hand in your master list – you will then receive your continuing education certificates.

Any questions, please contact Linda Cox.

linda@theworldofwork.com or 713-818-1852

Navigating the Rivers of Change

Wednesday, July 17th

11:30 am – 5:00 pm	Registration Register for Scavenger Hunt at Registration Desk	San Antonio Foyer San Antonio Foyer
	Exhibits & Silent Auction	San Antonio II

Keynote: Persevering Through Adversity: Hope After Brain Injury

1:00 pm – 1:30 pm	Welcome – Rachita Sharma Presentation of Colors By VFW Honor Guard Post #76, San Antonio	San Antonio I
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm		San Antonio I 1.5CEU

Patti Gayle Foster, B.A.
Deana Adams, Ph.D., LPC-S

In her Session, Patti Foster will share her personal story of surviving a horrific car accident resulting in a 6-week coma along with multiple physical, emotional, and cognitive injuries. She will recount the story of her severe traumatic brain injury and how she successfully recovered through various levels of treatment. Participants will be shown how to identify coping strategies to address physical, emotional, and cognitive challenges and will be given specific tips on how to work with brain injury survivors and their caregivers.

Additionally, participants will gain 3 strategies to assist brain injury survivors' transition to home life from rehabilitation settings, as well as insight into the emotional challenges of recovering from brain injury. This knowledge will help develop behavioral strategies to assist survivors and their family support as they manage the cognitive and emotional issues of recovery.

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm Break


Keynote: WIOA and TSW: Ethical Challenges for Rehabilitation Professionals

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Steve Zanskas, Ph.D., CRC, LPC, CRCC Ethics Committee Chair

San Antonio I
ETHICS 1.5 CEU

From this session, participants will be able to identify enforceable standards of the 2017 CRC Ethics Code potentially impacted by the implementation of WIOA, be able to apply ethical decision making models to resolve ethical dilemmas in the provision of transition from school to work services and demonstrate the ability to analyze ethical dilemmas and support the basis for their course of action.



6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

President's Reception
Co-Sponsored by Commission on Rehabilitation
Counselor Certification (CRCC) and TRA
Cash Bar and Light Snacks

Drury Riverwalk Patio

Navigating the Rivers of Change

Thursday, July 18th

7:30 am – 5:00 pm	Registration	San Antonio Foyer
7:30 am – 5:00 pm	Exhibits and Silent Auction	San Antonio II

Keynote: TWC Updates and Support for Change, with Regional Perspectives

8:30 am – 10:00 am

San Antonio I
1.5 CEU

Ruth Hughs, J.D., Chair & Commissioner Representing Employers, TWC
Emily Boncek, M.Ed., TWS-VR Deputy Regional Director, South Texas Region

Chair Hughs will discuss the purpose and priorities of TWC and the role of Commissioner in representing employers promoting hiring people with disabilities. Participants will learn about TWC initiatives that increase awareness and will hear success stories and statistics. Hughs will discuss the development and expansion of successful models and support for change with regional perspectives.

Additionally, Emily will provide information regarding Regional initiatives, approaches and strategies used for building strong partnerships, supporting field staff and providing quality services to customers. This session will also discuss how VR staff have approached Workforce Integration in Region 6.

10:00 am – 10:30 am	Break & Networking with Exhibitors— Fill your Bingo Card when you visit them! Don't forget to bid at the auction!	San Antonio II
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Concurrent Sessions

Thursday, July 18th

10:30 am – 11:30 am

1.0 CEU

An Overview--Mental Health Disorders and Related Accommodations for the Workplace

Blanco

Wendy Mincer-Summers, M.S., M.A., NCC, LPC-I

One in five adults experiences a mental health condition every year. Mental health conditions can affect an individual's ability to function effectively in the workplace. Despite its prevalence, the social stigma associated with mental illness prevents many individuals from getting the help they need. This session defines common mental health conditions, explains how to recognize basic symptoms and signs of decompensation, and describes the resources that are available to help individuals get the treatment they need to function effectively at home and in the workplace. Attendees will learn tips that lead to successful outcomes for individuals with mental health conditions.

Integrating Multicultural Competencies and Diversity Perspectives in the Rehabilitation Process

Trinity

Angela L. Braden, M.A., M.Ed.

This session will provide participants an overview and critical analysis of the importance of multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusion in the rehabilitation process. Participants will be equipped with the knowledge, tools, and techniques needed to provide rehabilitation services to clients from diverse backgrounds, physical and psychological abilities, cultural perspectives, and/or value orientations. The goal of this session is for participants to better understand terminology, perspectives, and strategies that should be embraced or avoided by rehabilitation professionals working in the current sociocultural climate.

TRA's Advocacy on the Hill

Guadalupe

Panelists: Rachita Sharma, Ph.D., LPC-S, CRC; Nichole Rideau, M.Ed., M.S., CRC; and Jennifer Grimes Miles, Owner/President, Sure Placement

In this engaging session, panelists Dr. Rachita Sharma., Nichole Rideau, and Jennifer Grimes Miles will discuss and identify the ethical principles governing professional advocacy in the field of rehabilitation. Participants will learn about TRA's advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill on behalf of Texans with disabilities. They will gain insight into current policies that could potentially impact the lives of rehabilitation customers.

Navigating the Rivers of Change

Thursday, July 18th

11:30 am – 1:15 pm

TRA Awards Luncheon
Rachita Sharma, Emcee

San Antonio I

TRA AWARDS

Justin Dart Award

Presented to a person with a disability who has demonstrated self-motivation and personal courage in overcoming his/her disability beyond the assistance provided by any public service or private helping service agency.

Rehabilitation Professional of the Year Award

Presented to a rehabilitation professional who has made an outstanding contribution to one of the following which resulted in more effective services to persons with disabilities:

- rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and/or
- expansion of medical or rehabilitation programs and services.

Research, Project Demonstration, and/or Special Program Award

Presented to the chief investigator, demonstration project director, or program director who has accomplished outstanding research or innovative program development within the field of rehabilitation.

Legislative Award

Presented to an individual who has achieved distinction in advocating for issues benefiting persons with disabilities.

Marilyn Padgett Extra Mile Award

Presented to the TRA member who has made exemplary contributions to the broad field of rehabilitation.

TRA Presidents Awards

To be presented by Rachita Sharma, TRA President.

Concurrent Sessions

Thursday, July 18th

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

1.5 CEU

Understanding Life Beyond ABI Rehabilitation

Guadalupe

Valerie Gotcher, M.S., CCC-SLP

The focus for this session will be on describing the psychosocial benefits of return to employment or community volunteering in adult survivors of acquired brain injury (ABI), and how to identify early discharge planning and how it assists with long-term recovery. Attendees will be able to describe community supports, including the Clubhouse model, that leads to the highest level of post-rehab independence for ABI survivors and be able to name the benefits of peer-directed mentoring on reported quality of life in the ABI population.

Employment Issues for Individuals with Disabilities and a Criminal Background

Blanco

Panelists: Brandy Borque, MCRC, CRC; Brian Schmidt, J.D.; Victor Pratt, B.A.

In this interactive panel, panelists Brian Schmidt, Brandy Borque & Victor Pratt will discuss and identify issues facing consumers with criminal backgrounds. Topics covered will include deferred adjudication and probation, expunctions, sealing orders, drivers license concerns, along with parole obligations, adjustment issues upon re-entry and disclosing criminal history. In addition, criminal background vocational training, WOTC and bonding will be discussed. Questions from attendees are encouraged and case by case scenarios will be presented.

Accessing VR Services for Self Employment

Trinity

Will Burley, A.A.S., Paralegal Studies, Disability Rights Texas

The intent for this session is to help the VRC's work better with customers who express an interest in self-employment and to provide VRC's with current information about how to navigate self-employment. He will address how and where to access resources and discover hidden markets. This will help to provide VRC's with tangible resources to share with their customers who are interested in self-employment as their vocational goal, particularly in rural areas, with a focus on virtual resources and business formation.

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Break

San Antonio II

Keynote: Where Jobs Are, How They're Changing and Why Skills Matter

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

ETHICS


1.5 CEU

San Antonio I

Richard Froeschle, M.A., Manpower & Industrial Relations

This engaging session tells the story of a dynamic Texas labor market driven by skills, and how these trends can and will influence future job growth and employment opportunity. It will interweave the wide range of information resources available to better understand how the labor market is transforming. Participants will understand how recent trends affect the labor market and force availability, as well as the various factors influencing market demand in particular

occupations. Participants will also learn about the impacts of technology on industries and occupations on worker skill requirements, workplace essentials and digital skills to getting a job, changing business practices and worker preparation, and new and hybrid occupations along with new skill combinations. This discussion will help to understand the various labor market information resources and how to conduct individual career guidance.



5:15 pm	Silent Auction Ends – pay at registration Friday by 10:30 am	
5:15 pm – 5:45 pm	TRA Annual Membership Meeting Rachita Sharma, TRA, President, Presiding	Blanco
6:00 pm	Scavenger Hunt on Riverwalk	Riverwalk
8:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Game Night	Guadalupe

Navigating the Rivers of Change

Friday, July 19th

7:30 am – 10:30 am	Registration	San Antonio Foyer
7:30 am – 10:30 am	Silent Auction payment and pickup items	
7:30 am – 12:00 pm	Exhibitors	San Antonio II
8:00 am – 8:30 am	Turn in Scavenger Hunt results at Registration Desk	San Antonio Foyer
12:00 pm	Continuing Education Certificates for Conference Issued at end of last session	San Antonio Foyer

Concurrent Sessions

Friday, July 19th

8:30 am – 10:00 am

1.5 CEU

A Deeper Dive into the Characteristics of Autism: What are the Specific VR Implications?

Blanco

Jennifer Hines, M.Ed., BCBA, LBA

In this session, participants will be able to identify the 4 main categories of Autism characteristics and within those characteristics, be able to give at least 2 examples of each and how they can manifest in employment or post-secondary training. Participants will learn to identify at least one VR implication when given an example of an Autism characteristic.

Building Relationships with Employers for Effective Job Placement

Guadalupe

Paul Barnes, B.A., Certified Employment Specialist

Preparation, Presentation and Perseverance are key elements to this session as are ways to reach employers, overcome fears/doubts, and resolve questions to hiring people with barriers to employment. The session will address disability job development and placement services and vocational consultation and services for employers, with emphasis on resume writing, cover letters and how employers view them during the screening/hiring process, interviewing tips and employer relations. Participants will learn the four stages of interviewing and marketing yourself to the employer, resources and techniques to help overcome fear and prepare any person to do well in an interview situation.

Helping Students with Autism and Developmental Disabilities Be Successful in College

Medina

DeAnn Lechtenberger, Ph.D. & Jared Burgoon, B.A.

Participants will learn about and be able to identify components of strengths-based planning and how to access applications for the CASE program. Through interactive discussion, participants will share questions and concerns regarding students with autism and developmental disabilities attending post-secondary education.

10:00 am – 10:30 am Break

Keynote: Dual Relationship and Multiple Customers: Ethical Considerations

10:30 am – 12:00 pm

San Antonio I

1.5 ETHICS CEU

Linda Holloway, Ph.D., CRC, Interim Associate Vice Provost for Faculty, UNT

In this session, the various relationships that rehabilitation counselors encounter in their day-to-day work and the diverse ethical considerations of each group will be discussed, while articulating why a rehabilitation counselor's primary customer must always be the person with a disability they are serving. This session will address the sections of the CRC Code of Ethics and the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors that address dual relationships and multiple customers and how to resolve ethical issues using various ethical decision-making models.

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Texas NeuroRehab Center
University of North Texas
United Access
UNT WISE

Please take time to visit with Exhibitors and learn about their services!

Presenters

DEANA ADAMS, PH.D., LPC-S

Persevering Through Adversity: Hope After Brain Injury

Dr. Deana Adams is the President and Founder of Hope After Brain Injury and currently serves as the Executive Director of Hope Behavioral Health in Arlington, TX. Deana holds a PhD in Psychology and Counseling, a MA in Religion Education and Marriage and Family Counseling from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Deana is a licensed Social Worker and Chaplain. She works in inpatient and outpatient settings with adolescents, adults, civil servants; police officers and fire fighters. Her focus is Traumatic Brain Injury, Mood and Anxiety disorders, and Critical Incident Stress Debriefing. Deana has extensive experience as an EAP Workforce Consultant.

PAUL J. BARNES, BA, CERTIFIED EMPLOYMENT SPECIALIST

Building Relationships with Employers for Effective Job Placement

Paul has worked in the area of disability job development, coaching and placement for twenty-one years and has been employed in various disability training and development for more than 32 years. Currently, Paul is an Employment Consultant with WCF Mutual Insurance Company and previously has served as a Program Manager with the Brain Injury Association of Utah, and Job Developer at the Work Activity Center. Paul currently serves as the Western Region Representative to the National Rehabilitation Association Board of Directors and is a board member of the Utah Rehabilitation Association JPD Division and former President of the Utah Rehabilitation Association, and President of the National Rehabilitation Association Job Development and Placement Division.

EMILY BONCEK, M.ED.

TWC Updates and Support for Change, with Regional Perspectives

Emily serves as the Deputy Regional Director for the Texas Workforce Commission-Texas Workforce Solutions and has been involved with TWC for over 15 years, beginning as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor with DARS. Emily is also a sign language (ASL) interpreter and has used these skills as a case manager with deaf and hard of hearing individuals as well as interpreting for fellow students while attending classes and obtaining her undergraduate degree from Stephen F. Austin State University. She received her M.Ed. from the University of Kentucky.

BRANDY BORQUE, MCRC, CRC

Employment Issues for Individuals with Disabilities and a Criminal Background

Brandy is a graduate of UT Southwestern Medical Center's Masters of Rehabilitation Counseling program and the University of Texas at Tyler. She also served as a former Intensive Case Worker for the Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments (TCOOMMI), focusing on recently paroled clients who were at a high or moderate risk with elevated clinical needs.

Presenters

ANGELA L. BRADEN, M.A., M.ED.

Integrating Multicultural Competencies and Diversity Perspectives in the Rehabilitation Process: An Ethical Perspective

Angela is an award-winning classroom and on-line college professor with over ten years of experience in developing and leading programs serving individuals with physical, psychological, and sensory impairments. Angela is an Adjunct Professor in Speech Communications at Lone Star College in Kingwood, TX and also works as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor with Texas Workforce Solutions, where she provides vocational rehabilitation counseling services to individuals with disabilities. Angela designed and facilitates trainings on a multitude of topics such as diversity management, multiculturalism, student success, disability awareness and personal achievement to adult learners from diverse backgrounds and with various learning styles. Angela was a 2015 recipient of Lone Star Colleges Faculty Excellence Award. Angela received a Masters in Counselor Education and a Masters in Speech Communications from Texas Southern University.

JARED BURGOON, B.A.

Helping Students with Autism and Developmental Disabilities Be Successful in College

After graduation from Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Jared remained and became the Coordinator for Development and Scholarship within the College of Education. He went on to become a Senior Research Specialist in Institutional Advancement and is currently serving as a Learning Specialist (CASE) in the Burkhart Center for Autism Education and Research. During this time, Jared became the special needs ministry leader at the Monterey Church of Christ in Lubbock, and continues to be a part of the community today. Jared has shown continued service regarding the special needs of children and adults, especially for those on the spectrum.

WILL BURLEY, A.A.S.

Accessing VR Services for Self-Employment

Will is a PABSS Advocate in Austin with Disability Rights Texas, a Texas based advocacy agency helping people with disabilities understand and exercise their rights under the law, ensuring their full and equal participation in society. In this position, Will assists his clients by providing legal and administrative assistance and information concerning appropriate actions they can take to ensure the protection of their legal rights. He is a graduate of the Center for Advanced Legal Studies with an A.A.S. degree in Paralegal Studies.

PATTI GAYLE FOSTER, B.A.

Persevering Through Adversity: Hope After Brain Injury

Patti is an author, inspirational speaker and traumatic brain injury (TBI) survivor. She serves as Chair for the Services and Support Committee of the Texas Brain Injury Advisory Council, is a Consumer Advisory Council Member of the North Texas Traumatic Brain Injury Model System and Vice President of Hope After Brain Injury. Patti also does voice-overs for commercials, narrations, animation and audio books and was a radio host for WFRN and KVNE. Patti holds a B.A. in Music Education from Sam Houston State University.

RICHARD FROESCHLE, M.A.

Where Jobs Are, How They're Changing and Why Skills Matter

Richard is a labor market economist and former Director of the Labor Market and Career Information department of the Texas Workforce Commission. He also served as Director of the Texas State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (SOICC) and as a labor economist with the Texas Department of Community Affairs. He specializes in the fields of regional economic analysis, labor market

Presenters

dynamics, skill and job analysis, and the development and interpretation of labor market information. Richard received his M.A. in Manpower and Industrial Relations from the University of North Texas where he also taught microeconomics, regional labor market analysis and workforce strategic planning. He has written five books, numerous essays and briefs, and has presented at over 520 conference events on a variety of labor market topics.

VALERIE GOTCHER, M.ED., CCC-SLP

Understanding Life Beyond ABI Rehabilitation

Valerie currently serves as the Executive Director and Founder of the Brain Injury Network of Dallas (BIND). With over 15 years of experience, she is a Speech-Language Pathologist at the Baylor Institute for Rehabilitation (Frisco), where she focuses on adults with speech-language, cognitive, swallowing and voice disorders. Valerie is a graduate of the University of North Texas.

JENNIFER GRIMES MILES, OWNER, SURE PLACEMENT

TRA's Advocacy on the Hill

Jennifer Grimes Miles is the Owner and President of Sure Placement in Houston; an agency that has helped individuals with disabilities find and secure employment for over 14 years. She seeks to effectively represent individuals with disabilities and their abilities; as she works to promote the use of their skills and experience in the world of work. Her motto is "Turning Disabilities into Abilities". Ms. Grimes Miles is an Employment Services Provider for Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Division, maintaining credentials and an endorsement from the University of North Texas. She worked for Sullivan Diagnostic Treatment Center (NY), and Director of Employment Services with Nightingale Adult Day Center (TX). In addition, she is a member of the United Cerebral Palsy Association, as well as the National Rehabilitation Association. Jennifer recently advocated on Capitol Hill for individuals with disabilities as a representative of TRA and she also represented TRA at the NRA Summit in Washington, DC.

JENNIFER HINES, BCBA, LBA

A Deeper Dive into the Characteristics of Autism: What are the Specific VR Implications?

Jennifer Hines has worked in the field of neurodevelopmental disorders for 25 years in public schools, state agencies and in private practice. Currently, Jennifer is the State Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders Specialist for Texas Workforce Commission, Vocational Rehabilitation Division. She provides staff consultation and training and collaborates with stakeholders (employers, school districts, public universities, legislative staff and other state agencies). In the past seven years, Jennifer has developed many state policies to enhance vocational rehabilitation services for autism such as Applied Behavior Analysis, wrap around ASD supports, an autism endorsement earned through the University of North Texas. She established an autism premium for employment providers as well as created an interactive environmental work assessment used throughout the state. Jennifer received her M.Ed. in Special Education, concentrating in Autism and Emotional Disturbance from Texas State University in San Marcos. She has a personal knowledge of what it is like to transition a child with Autism to adulthood. Her son is successfully living on his own with a full-time job as a mail clerk. His journey, among many other customers, helped her identify and then create best practices.

Presenters

LINDA HOLLOWAY, PH.D., CRC

Dual Relationship and Multiple Customers: Ethical Considerations

Dr. Linda Holloway currently serves as Interim Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Success, Department Chair, Department of Disability and Addiction Rehabilitation, and was previously the Interim Dean, College of Health Services at the University, as well as a Professor at the University of North Texas, Department of Rehabilitation and Health Services. Her research interests include undergraduate education, supported employment, psychiatric rehabilitation and emergency preparedness for people with disabilities. In addition to the University duties, Linda serves on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Rehabilitation, is a Guest Editor for Rehabilitation Research, Policy, and Education, is a Past Chair and current member of the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification and is a Past President of the National Council on Rehabilitation Education.

RUTH HUGHS, J.D.

TWC Updates and Support for Change, with Regional Perspectives

Ruth Hughs serves as the Chair and Commissioner Representing Employers of the Texas Workforce Commission appointed by Governor Greg Abbott to the three-member commission in July 2015. Chair Hughs is dedicated to supporting a workforce system that creates value and offers employers, individuals, and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity and serves as an advocate for the over 550,000 Texas employers. Her office provides training and assistance with workplace hiring, managing and recruiting matters. She is devoted to supporting the economic development and education that helps advance the skilled workforce that Texas demands. She also serves as the chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Cultural Affairs, which identifies issues impacting the state's changing demographics. In 2018, she received a Certificate in Leader Development at the U.S. Army War College's National Security Seminar. Ruth served in the private practice of law. She also previously served in the Texas Attorney General's Office as the Director of Defense Litigation, advising on federal, state and local matters and providing executive oversight for the civil litigation divisions.

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DEANN LECHTENBERGER, PH.D.

Helping Students with Autism and Developmental Disabilities Be Successful in College

DeAnn Lechtenberger currently serves as the Director of Community Outreach, Program Director for the SE Program for the Burkhart Center for Autism Education and Research & Research Assistant Professor at Texas Tech University. Interests and research involve post-secondary college transition for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, wraparound planning, and teacher preparation for inclusive practices. DeAnn is a prolific and accomplished author of numerous papers and has presented on a national scale regarding educational assessments and the special needs of students and teachers in post-secondary educational settings. DeAnn has taught in the public and private school sector as well as at the university level. She received her B.A., M.S. and Ph.D. from the University of North Texas.

WENDY MINCER-SUMMERS, M.S., M.A., NCC, LPC-I

Overview--Mental Health Disorders and Related Accommodations for the Workplace

Wendy is a Doctoral student in Rehabilitation and Health Services at the University of North Texas. She is a Master Trainer for SMRC, formerly Stanford University's Self-Management Programs; Diabetes, Chronic Disease, Chronic Pain, HIV, Falls Prevention, Caregivers and Stress. Prior to entering her Ph.D. studies, she was a counselor at Crossroads Counseling Center and ACAP community, an educational program offering information, resources, support and community for Adult-Children of Aging Parents, in Hickory, NC. She received her M.S. in Gerontology from the University of North Texas and her M.A. in Mental Health Counseling from Lenoir-Rhyne University (NC). Wendy recently attended the NRA Summit and Conference in Washington, DC where she advocated on Capitol Hill for individuals with disabilities as a member of TRA.

VICTOR PRATT, B.A.

Employment Issues for Individuals with Disabilities and A Criminal Background

Victor Pratt is the founder of "CriminalBackgroundJobHelp.com", a business providing employment consulting services to the unemployed, underemployed, and specializes in aid to those with criminal backgrounds. Victor has strategically brokered numerous partnerships between employers and jobseekers. He is an employment service provider with the Texas Workforce Commission and Workforce Development Commission. In his profession, he has first-hand knowledge of the challenges related to "re-entry". He is a military veteran and a graduate of Texas Christian University.

NICHOLE RIDEAU, M.S., M.ED., CRC

Disability's Advocacy on the Hill

Nichole is a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor with Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Division and an Adjunct Lecturer with The College of Health Care Professions. She currently serves as a Board Member at Large and Advocacy Co-Chair for Texas Rehabilitation Association. She advocates for individuals with disabilities on Capitol Hill and at the state level. Nichole received a Master of Education in Special Education and a Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of North Texas. She is also a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

BRIAN SCHMIDT, J.D.

Employment Issues for Individuals with Disabilities and A Criminal Background

Mr. Schmidt is a Criminal Defense Attorney and Partner with the firm of Wickel and Schmidt, an Athens, Texas based law firm. Mr. Schmidt is a graduate of the University of Texas Austin School of Law, Past President of the Henderson County Bar Association, has served as the Henderson County Teen Court Judge and Courtroom Trainer for the past eight years and is a two-time recipient of the East Texas Crisis Center's People's Award.

RACHITA SHARMA, PH.D., LPC-S, CRC

ACA's Advocacy on the Hill

Rachita Sharma is currently a Senior Lecturer and Clinical Director in the Department of Rehabilitation and Health Services at the University of North Texas where she supervises the clinical training of graduate and undergraduate students. She earned her Doctoral degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, her Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling Psychology from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, and her Bachelor's degrees in Biology and Psychology from University of Texas at Dallas. As a Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor (LPC-S) in the state of Texas and a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC), Rachita has extensive experience working in the field of mental health and disability adjustment. Her previous work experiences have involved working at the inpatient psychiatric unit of Children's Medical Center in Dallas, the Assessment Clinic of Parkland Hospital in Dallas, the Traumatic Brain Injury clinic of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Washington DC, the Counseling and Psychological Services Center and Veterans Center of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, and the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. Rachita is an active member of several organizations at national, state, and local levels, also serving as a Board member for 3 such organizations.

STEVE ZANSKAS, PH.D.

ACA and TSW: Ethical Challenges for Rehabilitation Professionals

Steve Zanskas is an Associate Professor at the University of Memphis Counseling Educational Psychology and Research Department. In addition to his professorial duties, he also serves as Dean's Faculty Fellow overseeing, facilitating and coordinating efforts focused on faculty and graduate student mentoring and development. Steve currently serves as COE Dean's Faculty Fellow, Coordinator Ed.D. Counseling & Ph.D., Counselor Education & Supervision Program, and as Co-Director at the Center for Rehabilitation & Employment Research. In addition to his University duties, he serves as Ethics Chair on the Tennessee Commission of Rehabilitation Counselor Certification Commission and is President Elect of the Tennessee Counseling Association.

FRIDAY IS T-SHIRT DAY!!

TRA shirts are available in the registration area!

Group photo will be taken at 10:15 a.m. on Friday.

A \$10 donation for t-shirts and \$15 donation for polo shirts.

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Raffle tickets

TRA pins – donation of \$5 each

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TODAY IS T-SHIRT DAY!!

Group photo will be taken at 10:15 a.m.

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donation for the Alamo
Souvenirs for this year's
conference.

TRA thanks the staff of the
Drury Plaza Hotel
San Antonio Riverwalk
for all of your help!

TRA thanks the VFW, Post # 76 for providing the Honor Guard at
the Opening Session of the TRA Conference.

VFW # 76, as the oldest in the State of Texas, is an Historical
Landmark having been chartered in 1917
by Veterans of the Spanish American War!