

Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention



2025 *Alberti Center Conference*

BUILDING ALLYSHIP AND SUPPORT FOR LGBTQ+ STUDENTS

Presented by:



October 22, 2025 | 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET
Classics V Banquet Facility | 2425 Niagara Falls Blvd | Amherst, NY

PROGRAM AGENDA

- 8:00** **Check-In | Continental Breakfast | Exhibitor Tables**
- 8:30** **Welcome**
Fenice Boyd, PhD
Associate Professor; Senior Associate Dean for EDJI
Graduate School of Education | *University at Buffalo*
- Opening Remarks**
Amanda Nickerson, PhD
SUNY Distinguished Professor; Director of Alberti Center | *University at Buffalo*
- 8:45** **Keynote I | *Now More Than Ever: Understanding and Supporting Gender Diverse Students (1.5 CE contact hours)***
Todd A. Savage, PhD, NCSP
Professor of School Psychology | *University of Wisconsin-River Falls*
Former President, *National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)*
- 9:45** **Debrief/Q&A**
- 10:15** **Break | Exhibitor tables**
- 10:30** **Keynote II | *How Inclusive School Policies and GSAs Shape Schools and Empower LGBTQ+ Students (1.5 CE contact hours)***
V. Paul Poteat, PhD
Professor of Applied Developmental and Educational Psychology | *Boston College*
- 11:30** **Debrief/Q&A**
- 12:00** **Buffet Lunch | Exhibitor tables | Networking | Raffles**
- 1:05** **Breakout Session I (choice):**
Free2Luv
GLYS WNY
- 1:50** **Break | Exhibitor tables**
- 2:00** **Breakout Session II (choice):**
Human Rights Campaign - Welcoming Schools
Niagara Pride
- 2:45** **Closing Remarks | Evaluations | Pick up raffle prizes!**

ALBERTI CENTER FOR BULLYING ABUSE PREVENTION

The Alberti Center promotes the well-being of youth by reducing bullying abuse and other forms of school violence through research, evidence-based tools and outreach to students, educators and communities.

Amanda B. Nickerson, PhD | Director

Stephanie S. Fredrick, PhD | Associate Director

Brie Kishel | Program and Operations Manager

Toni Torchia, PhD | Community Programming Consultant

Hannah Rapp, PhD | Postdoctoral Associate

Katie Brown & Rahnema E Jannat | Presidential Fellows

Riley Godwin, Jay'ana King, Bea Mask, & Savannah Rourk | Schomburg Fellows

Dylan Harrison, Kay Huang, Kat Margiotta & Lucia Sun | Graduate Assistants

Rachel Citron, Jake Lis, Sarah Woyken & James Wicke | Research Assistants

*With special thanks and sincere gratitude to our benefactor, **Dr. Jean M. Alberti**, as well as **Dr. Kathryn Jens**, for their continued dedication, generosity and support of our mission!*

CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS

BAND Against Bullying

BryLin Hospital

Free2Luv

Horizon Health Services

Peaceful Schools

Spectrum Health and Human Services

UB Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention

UB Graduate School of Education



Todd A. Savage, PhD, NCSP

(he/him)

Professor of School Psychology, *University of Wisconsin-River Falls*

Former President, *National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)*

Todd A. Savage, Ph.D., NCSP is a professor in the school psychology program at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF); he is also a former president of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). Dr. Savage earned his doctorate from the University of Kentucky in 2002 and prior to his current position at UWRF, he was on faculty in the school psychology program at New Mexico State University. Dr. Savage's scholarly research interests include LGBTQ+ issues in education with an emphasis on gender diversity; social justice matters; suicide education, prevention, and risk assessment; and school safety and crisis prevention, preparedness, and intervention.

Now More Than Ever: Understanding and Supporting Gender Diverse Students

The purpose of this session is to provide the participant with increased awareness and knowledge about gender diversity, in general; the experiences of transgender gender diverse students in k-12 schools will also be addressed. Finally, advocacy and other strategies the participant can employ to support this population of students will be highlighted.

Learning Objectives

Session attendees will:

- Experience greater awareness of gender identity and gender diversity matters in schools.
- Increase their knowledge base related to gender diversity as well as the impact of trauma and other factors on gender diverse students.
- Learn about advocacy and general strategies they can employ to support gender diverse students and to improve school climate as it pertains to gender diversity.



V. Paul Poteat, PhD

(he/him)

Professor of Applied Developmental and Educational Psychology
Boston College

V. Paul Poteat, PhD, is a Professor of Applied Developmental and Educational Psychology at Boston College. He conducts research on the school-based experiences of LGBTQ+ youth. His research on Gender-Sexuality Alliances (GSAs) has identified ways in which these school clubs promote empowerment and resilience among youth from diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. Likewise, his work has identified how the implementation of LGBTQ+ inclusive school policies and practices promote LGBTQ+ youth's wellbeing and academic engagement. His work has also examined bias-based harassment to identify individual and peer factors that contribute to such behavior or that buffer against its effects. Dr. Poteat's research has been supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). *Read more about Dr. Poteat on our conference website.*

How Inclusive School Policies and GSAs and Empower LGBTQ+ Students

LGBTQ+ inclusive school policies and Gender-Sexuality Alliances (GSAs; school clubs that affirm students' diverse sexual orientations and gender identities) have the potential to promote safety, empowerment, wellbeing, and academic success among LGBTQ+ students. This presentation shows evidence of how implementing LGBTQ+ inclusive policies and practices in schools is tied to beneficial outcomes for LGBTQ+ students. This presentation also highlights how GSAs provide a space for support and collective action among LGBTQ+ and allied students, with attention to specific GSA characteristics and experiences that underlie these benefits. This presentation concludes with recommendations for how to enhance the benefits of these and other efforts in schools to affirm LGBTQ+ students.

Learning Objectives

Session attendees will:

- Explain how GSAs and inclusive policies benefit LGBTQ+ students in their school.
- Identify practices that GSAs can use to support LGBTQ+ and allied student members.
- Provide examples of inclusive policies and practices and describe their intended aims.

PRESENTING SPONSOR

Kindness *can change the world:*

emotionally prepared
and healthy kids are
the catalyst.



In and Around School

School-Based services available in Williamsville and Lancaster school districts and the Boys and Girls Club Masten Clubhouse.

Special Place for Youth

Our new Riverside Counseling Center at 1775 Niagara St at Bridge St in Buffalo is specific for youth under age 18.

Crisis Support

Spectrum Health C.A.R.E.S. is 24/7 crisis support for youth under 18 and their families at 716-882-4357.

Emotional Support

Spectrum Health Buffalo Hope COMHPS shares emotional support and coping experiences in City of Buffalo locations.



SpectrumHealth
& Human Services

Our counseling centers in Buffalo, Springville, Warsaw, and West Seneca serve people of all ages.

www.shswny.org

BREAKOUT SESSION I (1:05-1:50PM)



Tonya Sandis
(she/her)
Founder &
President of Possibilities



Araya Sandis
(she/her)
Director of Programming &
LGBTQ+ Outreach

This session will offer an overview of FREE2LUV's commitment to empowering LGBTQ+ youth through the arts. They will share their art empowerment mental health program, EXPRESS IT!, providing attendees with a creative expression journal and lead an interactive workshop.



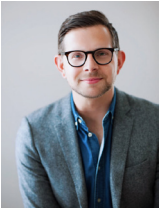
Jack Kavanaugh
(he/him)
Executive Director



Sare Martin, MSW
(they/them)
Family Support Coordinator

This session will explore best practices for supporting LGBTQ+ youth in your life in the current climate, including specific strategies and ideas for practice.

BREAKOUT SESSION II (2:00-2:45PM)



Nicholas McBride, EdD

(he/him)

National Facilitator

Associate Professor & Coordinator of Music Education

The College of New Jersey

This interactive session will explore what it means to be an effective ally and advocate, beginning with a brief introduction to the Welcoming Schools program and how its training and resources help build the competency and confidence needed to support LGBTQ+ youth and families. Participants will reflect on their own experiences and messages received growing up around LGBTQ+ topics, then engage in practical exercises to build skills in responding to resistance and bias.



Ronald Zenon Piaseczny, LMHC

(he/him)

Doctorate of Jurisprudence

President

This session will provide an overview of how LGBTQ+ youth in rural communities and underserved areas manage and cope with issues of bullying/harassment, lack of support systems and overcoming adversity. Best practices will be shared, for schools and other community groups, on how to create safe spaces.

Follow us on social media and subscribe to our mailing list
at **ed.buffalo.edu/alberti/subscribe**



@UBBullyPrevCtr



@UBBullyPrevCtr



@ubbullyprevctr



@ub_bullyprevctr



@ubalberticenter



@company/ubalberticenter

Please tag us in any of your conference photos or use
#alberticenter, we would love to share them!

PRESENTING SPONSOR

Spectrum Health and Human Services

UNIVERSITY SPONSOR

University at Buffalo, Graduate School of Education

GREEN SPONSORS

Horizon Health Services

University at Buffalo, Gender Institute

BLUE SPONSORS

BryLin Hospital

Lawley Insurance

University at Buffalo, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

PURPLE SPONSOR

National Federation for Just Communities of WNY, Inc.



University at Buffalo

Alberti Center for
Bullying Abuse Prevention
Graduate School of Education