



NORTH CAROLINA JUVENILE
SERVICES ASSOCIATION

CELEBRATING

60 years
OF

EMPOWERING YOUTH

A Legacy of Service - A Future of Hope

OCTOBER 14, 2026

EMBASSY SUITES -GREENSBORO, NC



President's Message

Dear NCJSA Members, Colleagues, and Friends,

It is my honor to welcome you to the North Carolina Juvenile Services Association's 2026 Fall Conference as we celebrate an extraordinary milestone-60 years of empowering youth! Our theme, "A Legacy of Service, A Future of Hope-Celebrating 60 Years of Empowering Youth," honors the dedication of those who built the association and the commitment of those carrying its mission forward.

Since 1966, NCJSA has brought together professionals who share a belief in the potential of young people and the power of service to change lives.

The conference is an opportunity to reflect on our history, reconnect with colleagues, learn from one another, and celebrate the people who make our work possible. We proudly honor our past presidents, lifetime members, board members, and the many professionals whose daily efforts have helped youth and families across North Carolina.

As we celebrate our legacy, we also look toward the future. The voices and accomplishments of the young people we serve remind us why this work matters. Every opportunity offered, relationship strengthened, and success celebrated helps build a more hopeful future.

Thank you to our presenters, sponsors, community partners, and conference planning team for making this anniversary celebration possible. To every attendee, thank you for bringing your experience, compassion, and dedication to this gathering. Your contributions strengthen our association and the communities we serve.

I encourage you to share memories, make new connections, and leave this conference with renewed energy and purpose. Together, let us honor the past, celebrate the present, and embrace the possibilities ahead.

With gratitude,

Michelle Carey

President

North Carolina Juvenile Services Association

Wednesday, October 14, 2026



10 am – 1 pm
Registration/ Check in

1:00- 1:15 pm
Welcome
Michelle Carey, President; Daniel Sevigny, Vice President

1:15-2:30 pm
History of NCJSA & Group Discussion
Pam Stokes
Johnny Wilson

2:30-2:45 pm (BREAK)

2:45-4:00 pm
Juvenile Justice Diversion Programs
Austin Partlow (Coach P)
Dr. Kendall Taylor

4:00- 4:30 pm
NCJSA Business Meeting

4:30-6:30 pm
Dinner on Your Own

5:00-6:30 pm
NCJSA Board & Vendor Reception

6:30-7:30 pm
Business Exchange & Networking - Heavy hors d'oeuvres

7:30-10:00 pm
60th Anniversary Lip Sync Battle and Dance

Thursday, October 15, 2026



8:00 - 8:45 am

Registration

8:45 - 9:45 am

Breakout Sessions

Ballroom A

** Creating Safe Spaces: Community Strategies That Prevent Youth Violence and Build Future Leaders*

Swan Davis

Ballroom B

** The REAL Way to Mentor Effectively Regarding High-Risk Youth*

Darryl Sturdivant

Ballroom C

Beyond Enforcement: Social Intervention as the Missing Link in Youth Violence Prevention

Cory Rawlinson

Ballroom D

The Universal Referral Form

Megan Perrault

9:45 -10:00 am (BREAK)

10:00 -11:00 am

Internet Crimes Against Children

Investigator Wesley Brown & Major Heath Gill

11:00 - 11:45 am

Stories from Youth in Community Programs

Tonya Terrell & Johnny Wilson

11:45 am -1:30 pm

Lunch & Luncheon

Keynote

William “Billy” Lassiter (DJJDP)

1:30 - 2:00 pm (BREAK)

2:00 - 3:00 pm

“Crippled, But I’ve Got a Right to be Here!”

Understanding the Crisis of this Current Culture of Youth

Andre’ C. Barnes Sr.

3:15pm-4:15pm

Panel Discussion

4:15-5:30pm - Dinner on your own

5:00 - 8pm - Game Night

8:00 pm - Bingo

Friday, October 16, 2026



9:00 - 9:45 am

The Direct Care Divide...Going from an Us vs Them to Just Us
Mike O'Connor

9:45 -10:00 am (BREAK)

10:00 - 11:15 am

Closing Speaker

*From Compliance to Connection: Engaging Families as Partners in Juvenile
Justice Services - Practical Strategies for Building Trust, Ownership, and
Partnership in Juvenile Services*

Dr. Patrice J. Carter, PhD, BCC, CHHC, CPSS

11:15 am - 12:00 pm

Conference Closing

SAVE THE DATE....

2027 Spring Conference

New Bern, NC

March 10-12th

NCJSA 2026 FALL CONFERENCE

Keynote Speaker



William L. Lassiter, MPA

Deputy Secretary, Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
NC Department of Public Safety

william.lassiter@ncdps.gov | 919-825-2719

Mr. Lassiter plans and directs operations of the Juvenile Justice Division and serves as a member of the Department's senior leadership team. As Deputy Secretary of Juvenile Justice, he oversees juvenile facility operations, juvenile court services, juvenile community programs, and juvenile intervention and treatment programs.

Mr. Lassiter received his master's degree in public administration from North Carolina State University, and in January 1998, he began working as a researcher for the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in the Center for the Prevention of School Violence. In 1999, he became the project coordinator for North Carolina's statewide school safety tip line and its accompanying educational campaign: *Working against Violence Everywhere (WAVE)*. By 2001, Mr. Lassiter had been promoted to the Center's School Safety Specialist. In this position, he coordinated a number of projects for the Center, including the "*What We Want to be is Bully-Free*" awareness campaign, North Carolina's annual census of school resource officers, the North Carolina portion of the National Institute of Justice-sponsored national evaluation of school resource officers, North Carolina's critical incident response kit project, North Carolina's pre-service teacher conflict management project, and the Center's character education effort. In 2005, Mr. Lassiter was called upon to lead the Center and help it realize its vision of "*every student attending a school that is safe and secure, one that is free of fear and conducive to learning.*"

In 2010, Mr. Lassiter was called upon to serve as the State Contracts Administrator for Juvenile Community Programs. In 2013, he was promoted to Director of Juvenile Community Programs, where he worked to develop a comprehensive service delivery model for youth in the state's juvenile justice system.

In 2015, Mr. Lassiter was appointed to the Governor's Task Force on Mental Health and Substance Use, for which he co-chaired the Work Group on Children, Youth and Families.

Gov. Roy Cooper appointed Mr. Lassiter as chair of the N.C. Task Force for Safer Schools in October 2019. This task force serves as an advisory board to the Center for Safer Schools, and provides guidance and recommendations to the Governor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the General Assembly to improve statewide policy to enhance statewide and local capacities to create safer schools.

Mr. Lassiter was honored to receive the prestigious National Service Award from the Hamilton Fish Institute on School and Community Violence, for his exemplary service to children, youth, and communities. Lassiter has co-authored Preventing Violence and Crime in America's Schools: From Put-Downs to Lock-Downs, which takes an in-depth look at the causes and solutions of youth violence. He has been featured on a number of major news networks and national publications including: CNN, Fox News, the BBC, USA Today, the Los Angeles Times, the New York Times, and many others.

Other published works by Mr. Lassiter include:

Lassiter, William and McDaniel, Joanne. "'...*School under siege*....' Reality Checking the Security of Our Schools." Campus Safety Journal.

Lassiter, William and McDaniel, Joanne. "Time to put your Child's School to the Test." Southeastern Education Network. Fall / Winter 2005, volume 7 issue 2.

Finn, Peter, Lassiter, William, McDevitt, Jack, Rich, Tom, and Shively, Michael. Comparison of Program Activities and Lessons Learned among 19 School Resource Officer Programs. National Institute of Justice. Feb 28, 2

Featured Presenters



Pamela Forsythe Stokes is the Eastern Area Manager for the Community Programs section of the Department of Public Safety Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. As Area Manager, she works with an amazing team to ensure that the mission of the Department is carried out through the JCPCs and Programs in the Eastern Area.

Pam graduated from East Carolina University with a degree in Criminal Justice and Social Work. She began her career with Juvenile Services Division (as it was called prior to DJJDP) in February 1989 as a court counselor.

In 1995, she went to work in the Wayne County School System as a school social worker. She returned to DJJDP in 2000 and continued as a court counselor and a supervisor over CBA programs. (Before they were JCPC Programs). In 2002, she was offered a position as a consultant. After 16 years as a consultant, Pam retired June 30, 2018. During her time with Juvenile Justice, Pam served on the Board of the NCJSA for over 25 years.

Pam returned to DPS-DJJDP in March of 2019 and became the Area Manager in October 2019. She continues to serve in this capacity.

Pam lives in Goldsboro with her husband Mike and their 3, four-legged adopted children, Precious, Marti, and Chief.



Austin "Coach P" Partlow is an educator, curriculum developer, organizational strategist, systems architect, author, and justice-experienced leader whose work focuses on developing people and transforming the systems that surround them.

As Co-Founder and Chief Programs Officer of Salute 1st, Coach P leads the design and implementation of leadership development programming centered on four core areas: Character Training, Leadership Development, Emotional Management, and Perspective Realignment.

His work is focused on helping young people strengthen identity, improve decision-making, build resilience, and develop the internal tools needed to lead themselves and others. Coach P is a magna cum laude graduate of Claflin University, where he earned a degree in Organizational Management. He also serves as Director of Prison Outreach at Claflin University, supporting higher education access, student re-engagement, reentry strategy, and pathways connecting education to long-term opportunity.

A justice-experienced scholar and reentry leader, Coach P brings more than 27 years of lived experience within the justice system into his professional work in education, youth development, curriculum design, and systems transformation.

He is the author of *"The War at the Gate of Identity"*, Co-Author of *"Reclaim Pathway"*, and CEO of OmniStrat Nexus, a strategic intelligence and systems architecture company focused on people, relationships, opportunity, and organizational strategy. Across every platform, his work is grounded in one central belief:

"Character is the new currency"



Swan Davis, founder of the nonprofit organization **Let's Make It Happen Together, Inc. (LMIHT)**, understands firsthand the challenges faced by underserved communities. Raised in New Jersey amid poverty and exposure to violence, Swan experienced instability early in life. After relocating to the South as a teenager, he encountered additional hardships, including racism and family disruption. His educational journey was inconsistent until a mentor provided the guidance, accountability, and support that ultimately changed the trajectory of his life.

With that foundation, Swan went on to earn a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Fayetteville State University and a Master of Science in Human Resource Management from Webster University. Despite facing personal challenges, including divorce and struggles with depression and anxiety, he found purpose through serving others by volunteering, mentoring youth, and coaching sports.

These experiences inspired Swan to establish Let's Make It Happen Together, Inc. to ensure that young people facing similar circumstances have access to the mentorship, guidance, and support he once needed. Through programs such as **Adopt-A-Neighborhood**, the organization provides mentoring, life-skills development, educational support, and community-based resources to at-risk youth and families.

Today, Swan also serves as Vice Chair of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) and Chairman of the JCPC Public Awareness Committee (PAC), contributing to initiatives that address youth safety, prevention, leadership development, and community-based solutions.

Swan continues to lead with a deep commitment to creating opportunities, strengthening families, empowering young people, and building safer, more resilient communities. His journey reflects a powerful transformation of personal adversity into a lifelong mission of service—using the lessons of his own experiences to create opportunities and positively impact the lives of others.

Presenter Spotlight



Johnny Wilson
President/Ceo of Fayetteville Urban Ministry

When I was 22 years old, I worked in a mill in rural Landrum, South Carolina. I was a “fixer” who worked third shift; all night. It was my job to make the machines go. One night, I arrived to work and they were all down, I laughed and looked up and said, “Lord, I can’t do this until I’m 65!” It wasn’t that this job wasn’t good enough for me, it was just an overwhelming feeling that came over me as I was supposed to be doing something different in the world. Even though it’s been years since I left the mill behind, I continue to be a “fixer,” just in a very different way.

I was raised by my grandmother and for a large part of my life we lived on a farm where nature was truly our friend. Indoor water and plumbing were a challenge. However, even though we experienced some intense hardships, we also felt very blessed. I was a first-generation high school graduate and a pretty good athlete. In fact, I was one of the first African Americans to play quarterback for my school. I attended a basketball tryout in Spartanburg, South Carolina and Methodist University showed interest in me. In 1995, I moved to Fayetteville, North Carolina and played collegiate basketball until 1999. My time at Methodist was unconventional at best. As a 23-year-old freshman and father of one, I was older than most of my classmates, which earned me the nickname “grandpa.” Still, I won many games and even set a few team records. Most notably, a 20-game win-streak and an NCAA Elite 8 playoff run in 1997; I am still humbled to have been recognized in the Hall of Fame with that team. Though, my biggest accomplishment (well beyond basketball) was the day my four-year-old son escorted me across the stage as I accepted my Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice.

Having been raised with a lack of resources, I was driven by a deep desire to serve as a resource to others. After graduating at age 26, I began my nonprofit career in 1999 as a volunteer mentor in Fayetteville Urban Ministry (FUM) ’s Find-A-Friend youth program. I knew that I wanted to

work with kids, but I didn't want to lock them up. As an adult teen, I'd had my own brief encounter with the legal system and learned a great deal from that experience. Fast forward many years, I could have never imagined that my mistake would become such a blessing. That experience led me to volunteer at FUM and after several months I was hired on as staff. Meanwhile, as my grandmother's health was declining, she was still caring for my two younger sisters ages 5 and 9, one of whom has epilepsy. When my grandmother passed, though my journey at Fayetteville Urban Ministry was just starting to blossom, I had to step in and assume guardianship and begin raising my sisters. A tough to transitional time in my life in raising my sisters and co-parenting my son but I had always absorbed my grandmother's compassion and optimistic views that often allowed me to see the light and look beyond myself in every scenario. I wouldn't trade those years for the world, it was hard but we adapted and many people helped along the way. In 2001, I received a promotion and became the Director for the Find-A-Friend program.

After serving as Associate Executive Director for several years, I was given the opportunity to be the CEO/President of Fayetteville Urban Ministry in 2012. However, this accomplishment came with unbelievable challenges as I'd inherited a non-thriving organization with a struggling budget, much debt and very close to closing its doors. Using the wisdom of my grandmother and my spiritual compass, I strived to make Fayetteville Urban Ministry renascent to the community. As an athlete, I utilized my competitive appetite for winning as a catalyst for change and got to work rebuilding the organization's reputation, strengthening its relationships, seeking out new opportunities, funding, partnerships and most importantly getting the "right" team in place. Today, the organization is flourishing, having reached its highest level of sustainability in history. It has a reserve account, raised enough support to build a brand new youth enrichment center and owns two facilities, completely debt-free. More importantly, it has enhanced its programs and services and touches the lives of over 15,000 individuals in the community annually – 100% free of cost. I am so incredibly honored and blessed to be a part of it, but what I am proud of most is that our team achieves through integrity while honoring our mission, community partners and the people who we serve.

As the Chief Executive Officer, I often tell my team that they don't work for me, but for the higher power that has called each of us to serve, together. Be genuine. Don't be judgmental. Be generous. If the path is "right," then be righteous. We have been given a gift to help change and transform lives...but we can only do so by continuing to transform and grow our own.

Mr. Wilson has earned an impressive array of awards, distinguished honors, significant accomplishments, and notable partnerships.



Hello! I am Darryl Sturdivant; my beautiful wife is Robin Sturdivant! Children are our passion! From an early age, we have both been involved with assisting and caring for children. We are the proud parents of five. Two additional kids were added to our family from Liberia, Africa. We are very family-oriented and are not ashamed to pronounce the name of JESUS CHRIST.

I grew up in a very small home with my parents and 8 brothers and sisters. We lived in what can best be described as a 4-room house with no central heat and no stove. We were fortunate to have two strong, hardworking parents who taught us faith, value, and discipline. Shortly after high school, I enlisted in the military as a U.S. Marine for nine years. Upon completion of my military career, I became a police officer, where I recently retired after 30 years of service (25 with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department

and a combined five years with the University of North Carolina at Charlotte Police Department and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Police Department. The majority of my tenure as an officer was with the youth. My assignments consisted of being a D.A.R.E. Officer (Drug Abuse Resistance Education Officer, School Resource Officer (SRO) and Juvenile Priority Offender Strategy Team Officer (J-Post Officer), working primarily with troubled youth and their family. Both professionally and personally, speaking life into the lives of our youth has been a passion as well as a purpose. Our involvement with children is quite extensive. Over the last 20+ plus years, my wife and I have spent countless hours meeting and mentoring kids from all walks of life. We coached our own kids, which led us to coach AAU Basketball for over 11 years. With a brief moment of parental pride, we can state that our two oldest sons played basketball at Charlotte Christian with Stephon and Seth Curry.

In 2020, my wife and I received our Doctorate Degrees in Christian Studies and Biblical Counseling through Partners to the Promise School of Christian Education, accredited through Trans-World Accrediting Commission International, under the UNC Chapel Hill system, religious platform, A Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) at Gardner-Webb University, and an Associate in Law Enforcement at CPCC. We are involved in a Christian Family Ministry, namely, "Our Family Ministries CLT," an online Ministry based out of Charlotte, NC. We are committed to our tagline, *A Mentoring Lifeline For Our Youth*, just as much as we are committed to the children that enter the facility of Team Up Connections. The children are treated with the utmost respect, fairness and LOVE!



Pastor Cory "Pastor C" Rawlinson is a seasoned community leader, youth development professional, public servant, mentor, and executive with more than 25 years of experience working with young people, families, and communities.

He currently serves as Program Manager for Durham County's Gang Prevention and Intervention Program, where he provides leadership for strategies designed to prevent youth violence, strengthen community partnerships, develop positive pathways for young people, and support youth and young adults who are at elevated risk of justice-system involvement or community violence. His work reflects a commitment to building safer communities while creating meaningful opportunities for young people to succeed. Prior to his current role, Rawlinson served as Manager of MBK Durham (My Brother's Keeper), a national initiative launched under the Obama Administration to address opportunity gaps and improve outcomes for boys and young men of color. In that role, he worked across sectors to advance mentorship, education, leadership development, workforce opportunities, and community engagement.

With more than two decades of experience in youth development, Rawlinson has designed and facilitated youth programs, leadership initiatives, conferences, college tours, mentoring opportunities, and educational experiences across North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and internationally in Africa, Jamaica, and Brazil. His work has consistently centered on helping young people identify their strengths, develop leadership capacity, pursue education and career opportunities, and make positive decisions about their futures.

Rawlinson is a **member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.**, where his commitment to service and civic leadership has been recognized through several distinguished honors, including the **2023 Beta Phi Star Studded Award**, **2023 Beta Phi Citizen of the Year Award**, and the **2025 Sixth District Citizen of the Year Award**.

An alumnus of **North Carolina Central University**, Rawlinson earned a **Bachelor of Arts in English Literature** and later received a **Master of Public Administration** in December 2013. His academic background, combined with extensive experience in public administration, youth development, community engagement, and organizational leadership, has positioned him as a trusted leader at the intersection of government, community, education, and youth development. In addition to his professional leadership, Rawlinson serves as **Executive Pastor of Grace Church of Durham**. His ministry leadership complements his broader commitment to service, mentorship, and community transformation.

Whether working in government, mentoring young people, developing community initiatives, or leading organizations, Cory Rawlinson is committed to one central mission: **creating opportunities, developing people, and strengthening communities.**



Megan Perrault holds a bachelor's degree from UNC-Charlotte and a master's degree from the University of South Carolina, both in Criminal Justice. She has worked for the North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention since 2005. Positions she held include Research Associate, Social Research Manager, Residential Contract Administrator and currently, Compliance Manager in Community Programs. She has responsibility for data quality assurance, Service Directory, service matching and management information system improvements.



Sergeant W. K. Brown, Jr. serves with the Person County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division and has more than 17 years of law enforcement experience. After graduating from Basic Law Enforcement Training in 2009, he has dedicated his career to investigating serious criminal offenses and protecting vulnerable victims. Throughout his career, he has investigated a wide range of major felony cases, including crimes against children, sexual assaults, homicides, narcotics, fraud, and other complex criminal investigations.

Sergeant Brown specializes in child exploitation investigations and works closely with the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force. His experience includes investigations involving child sexual abuse material (CSAM), online exploitation, digital evidence recovery, social media investigations, electronic search warrants, and technology-facilitated crimes against children. He has partnered with local, state, and federal agencies to identify offenders, protect victims, and successfully prosecute those responsible.

In addition to his investigative responsibilities, Sergeant Brown holds a Master's degree in Criminal Justice and has served for several years as a law enforcement instructor. He regularly provides training on investigative techniques, digital evidence, and ICAC-related topics, while mentoring fellow officers and supporting professional development through annual in-service training.

Sergeant Brown is passionate about educating law enforcement professionals, parents, educators, and community members on emerging technology trends, online safety, and strategies for protecting children from internet-facilitated crimes. His presentations combine real-

world investigative experience with practical guidance, equipping audiences with the knowledge and resources needed to recognize, prevent, and respond to online threats.

Outside of his professional responsibilities, Sergeant Brown is a devoted husband and father of two. He enjoys spending time with his family, playing golf, and serving the community he has dedicated his career to protecting



Tonya Terrell is the Program Manager for Caswell County Youth Outreach/Enrichment Program and the Coordinator of Teen Court and Community Service/Restitution.

Tonya graduated from Rockingham Community College with a degree in Criminal Justice in 2007. That same year, she joined the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council as a member-at-large, where she held the role as Secretary for several years.

In 2013, the Caswell County Youth Outreach/Enrichment Program was established, and Tonya became the Coordinator of Life Skills and Administrator. In 2016, she added Coordinator of Parenting. In 2018, she transitioned into the Coordinator of Teen Court and Community Service/Restitution. In 2023, she became the Program Manager.

Tonya is currently the President of the North Carolina Teen Court Association and a member of the North Carolina Association of Community Restitution Programs.

When she is not at work, Tonya loves spending time with her husband, Baron, and their bloodhound Buddy, on their farm. (Note: She is not a farmgirl, just a girl living on a farm.) She is the proud Mama to 2 sons, Clay and Jared. You can find her on a soccer field, basketball court, or at a track meet cheering on her 3 grandsons, Jadian, Javarus & Jordan.

Tonya loves her job and the youth & families she works with. Her logo is the starfish reflecting the story, *The Star Thrower*. She believes we all can “make a difference for that one”.



Carleigh Robinson has volunteered in Tenn Court for eight years. Carleigh graduated cum laude from Barlette Yancey High School. After high school, Carleigh enrolled in Piedmont Community College. She graduated cum laude from college and earned 2 degrees. Right now, she is pursuing a career in law enforcement. She likes to relax with her dog Duke and listen to music.



Taylor Jones, and he is from Fayetteville, North Carolina. I am a Junior, Psychology major at Winston-Salem State University, and I am passionate about making a positive impact on those around me. He will talk about his journey and story. I told him roughly 10 minutes to talk about growth at Find-A-Friend of Fayetteville Urban Ministry.



Andre Barnes is a dynamic and visionary leader renowned for his transformational impact as an inspirational speaker, trainer, and mentor. Leveraging a wealth of real-world experience, he delivers compelling, actionable messages that drive positive change and empower diverse audiences. His sought-after sessions span Youth, Men's, and Women's Conferences; Youth Engagement; Domestic and Relational Matters; Family Support; and Restorative Relational Leadership Principles, consistently igniting growth and a sense of purpose in every setting.

A proud native of Muskegon Heights, MI, Barnes launched his distinguished military career in 1983. Over 12 years in the U.S. Army, he quickly advanced through the ranks, earning recognition as an exemplary instructor in Advanced Individual Training (AIT) and the Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC).

This pivotal role sharpened his leadership acumen and enabled him to shape the next generation of leaders. As Founder and CEO of Interpersonal CORE Consulting (ICC), Barnes fuses deep expertise with hands-on experience to deliver innovative leadership solutions.

Barnes boasts exceptional academic and professional credentials, including a Bachelor of Arts in Theology, a Bachelor of Science in Human Services (Summa Cum Laude), and a Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership from Columbia International University (CIU). He is a Certified Master Mental Health Coach (AACC) for Veterans and First Responders, an ARISE Certified Master Trainer in Life Skills, and a Certified Life Coach (CLC) specializing in Leadership Development, Relationship Building, Trauma-Informed Care for Veterans and First Responders, and Spiritual Growth. His expertise is further reinforced by certifications in Multicultural Training, Discipline with Dignity, Conflict Resolution, Effective Communication, Anger Management, and

Effective Parenting. With over four decades of hands-on experience, Barnes is a highly respected authority in family, youth, and leadership development circles nationwide.

Barnes has driven meaningful change as Program Coordinator for the Academy of Hope at Lee CI with the South Carolina Department of Corrections, where he pioneered efforts to transform the top 1% of the most violent leaders using the Violence Interruption leadership model. His service as a Mental Health Officer in a Restricted Housing Unit highlights his dedication to rehabilitation and restorative justice. Additionally, he served as Assistant Facility Administrator for the SCDJJ JDC Satellite Facility at the BRRC Campus, strengthening his impact on youth and institutional transformation.

As a thought-provoking author, Barnes shares transformative insights through three influential books: "Crippled, But I've Got a Right to Be Here!" (Understanding Today's Youth and Culture), "Can't Go Back, Can't Stay Here, What's Up Over There?" (The Changing Face of Leadership), and "There's a Leader in Me!" (Released May 2026). His writings powerfully address the evolving leadership paradigm and pressing cultural challenges of our era, equipping readers to navigate complexity and inspire change.

His energizing speaking engagements consistently inspire audiences and equip them with actionable strategies to reclaim their power and make purposeful, lasting change. Barnes is a frequent guest on "On Point" with Cynthia Hardy on 101.3 The Big DM, where he sparks thought-provoking dialogue on critical social, cultural, and spiritual issues.

Driven by unwavering dedication, Andre Barnes stands as a beacon of inspiration and transformation for congregations, students, corporations, radio audiences, and colleagues nationwide. His rare ability to connect authentically with diverse audiences positions him as a catalyst for growth—a transformative trainer, facilitator, inspirational speaker, and minister of the Gospel of Christ. Barnes empowers current and future leaders to step boldly into their potential and lead with vision and purpose.



Mike O'Connor has been employed at New Hope since 2010 and has led the Communications and Connections Team since 2012. Mike received his Bachelor's in Psychology from Westfield State College in Massachusetts.

Prior to joining the New Hope team, Mike enjoyed a 14-year career in the non-profit sector, working for Eckerd Youth Alternatives in their Wilderness Educational Program. Here, he served in roles of direct care and ultimately as the director of a 200-acre facility in Vance County, NC. Mike has served on numerous professional boards, community provider groups, Managed Care Collaboratives, and advocacy groups. Currently, he is a member of the North Carolina TIDE Committee (Training, Instruction, Development and Education), and serves on the Board of North Carolina Community Alternatives for Youth. Outside of work, Mike delights in his role as a husband and father, as well as the occasional round of golf.

Closing Speaker



Dr. Patrice Carter, PhD, BCC, CHHC, CPSS

Dr. Patrice J. Carter is the CEO of Breakpoint Coaching Collective, LLC, with her husband, Dalton Carter, a retired Army Veteran, serving as COO. She brings more than 30+ years of experience in entrepreneurship, military service, healthcare, leadership, academia, coaching, and professional development. Dr. Carter is a Board Certified Life Coach, Coach Trainer, Certified Peer Support Specialist, and Digital Course Creation Mentor. She is dedicated to equipping and empowering coaches, speakers, authors, executives, and entrepreneurs to transform their expertise into meaningful and sustainable ventures. Through Breakpoint Coaching Collective, Dr. Carter certifies and trains Christian Life Coaches while helping leaders integrate faith, purpose, professional development, and entrepreneurship into their work. She is also a sought-after speaker whose work focuses on leadership, entrepreneurship, coaching, resilience, wellness, faith, and personal and professional growth. Dr. Carter is the author of *SUPERb Woman: From Bad Girl to God's Girl* and *Rainbows in Dark Places*, an Amazon #1 New Release in Religious Mystery. With a PhD in Organization and Management, an MBA, an MSA in Healthcare Management, and a BS in Management, Dr. Carter brings an interdisciplinary perspective to the intersection of faith, education, entrepreneurship, leadership, and organizational development. Dr. Carter resides in North Carolina with her husband, Dalton. Together, they are proud “bonus” parents to their son, Miles, and daughters, Destiny and Desire. She is a Military Spouse, U.S. Army Reserve Veteran and Minister.

For more information, visit www.drpatricecarter.com.

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