2023

Grace Abbott Training Supervision Academy: A Year of Growth, Collaboration, and Impact

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Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy, University of Nebraska at Omaha

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GRACE ABBOTT TRAINING AND SUPERVISION ACADEMY

A Year of Growth, Collaboration, and Impact

2023
A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am pleased to share with you our 2023 Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy Report: A Year of Growth, Collaboration, and Impact. As you read through our report, you will see that in 2023, we focused on refining our offerings to meet the needs of our loyal base of social workers, mental health practitioners, and critical stakeholders who are passionate about learning and collaborating to improve people's lives.

The Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy provides evidence-based workforce development through continuing education and supervision for behavioral health practitioners at any career stage. We are committed to breaking down barriers and increasing access to help professionals who work tirelessly to serve our community’s most vulnerable members. In 2023, we improved accessibility for those living throughout Nebraska, across the United States, and around the world. We increased our offerings, diversified the content of our continuing education courses, and recruited diverse subject matter experts on a variety of important topic areas identified through data collection and satisfaction surveys. In 2024, we will continue our efforts by partnering with organizations to provide digital badges for course completion that learners can seamlessly post on social media platforms and earn recognition for specialized practice areas.

Finally, we want to express gratitude for entrusting us to create value in workforce development. We appreciate the support of the NU System, administrators, staff, faculty, presenters, community partners, and participants. We are particularly grateful to the University of Nebraska at Omaha leadership, including Dr. Lei and Dr. Bartle, and the faculty and staff at the Grace Abbott School of Social Work, who have provided unwavering support throughout our program’s growth and development.

We are excited for tomorrow, and we urge you to sign up for GATSA email announcements, follow us on social media, and share your ideas with us on ways to grow and work together.

Dr. Susan Reay, LICSW
Director
"The interactive exercise was very valuable. I appreciated the chance to meet and talk with others in the field and share experiences."

"I have loved this series. Even 20+ years into this field, I appreciate new training and insights."

"I found this training informative and helpful. I didn't know much about the topic and this training has sparked my interest!"

"Another wonderful training! So much information and looking forward to more."
GRACE ABBOTT TRAINING AND SUPERVISION ACADEMY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Grace Abbott School of Social Work has been a cornerstone in delivering structured continuing education and professional development opportunities to social workers and licensed mental health professionals in Nebraska and Iowa since 2018. Since then, our program has experienced consistent growth, witnessed unprecedented enrollment figures, and achieved heightened engagement within the NU system and among community partners across the state.

Today, Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy (GATSA) stands as a beacon of excellence, providing not only top-tier training and professional development but also supervision for provisionally licensed mental health professionals, individual and group consultation for fully licensed professionals, and ASWB exam preparation.

Our reach extends beyond Nebraska and Iowa, with professionals from across the United States and beyond benefiting from our offerings.

As we look to the future, GATSA remains steadfast in its commitment to workforce development, forging meaningful partnerships within the NU system and across Nebraska, and championing the educational and professional needs of social workers and mental health professionals.

Our unwavering dedication to elevating the profession while serving the mission of Grace Abbott School of Social Work (GASSW) and the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) positions us for continued success and impact in the years ahead.

Together, we are shaping a brighter future for our community and profession.
Our Team

SUSAN REAY
Director

ELLEN RICE
Assistant Director

KATIE ROBBINS
Senior Outreach Coordinator

MICHELLE NELESON
Continuing Education & Outreach Specialist

SHARILYN TUTTLE
Graduate Assistant

ABI WALDRON
Graduate Student Worker
In 2023, our training and supervision academy achieved remarkable milestones, engaging over 3,000 passionate participants in our diverse range of trainings. These efforts led to the issuance of more than 6,000 Continuing Education Units (CEUs), vital for supporting licensed behavioral health professionals and social workers in meeting Nebraska's professional licensure and certification requirements.

23
Percentage of participants working in rural Nebraska.

Beyond compliance, our programs equip professionals with advanced skills and knowledge essential for delivering informed and socially just services to our communities. With an average of 103 dedicated learners per session, our reach extends far and wide, connecting urban and rural communities across Nebraska and the United States.

19
Number of states who joined our trainings.

Our commitment to excellence and innovation continues to drive meaningful impact, empowering growth and enhancing the quality of care for those who need it most.

In 2023, GATSA engaged more than 3,500 training participants and issued more than 6,400 CEUs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Representation</th>
<th>Audience Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Therapist</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Manager</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2%</td>
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</tbody>
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COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Gratitude and collaboration lie at the heart of the Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy, and we extend sincere appreciation to our esteemed community partners and subject matter experts. In our commitment to delivering impactful training and fostering a diverse learning environment, we actively engage with partners throughout the community and across the state.

Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy (GATSA) recognizes the importance of tapping into different communities, and our collaborations with community partners plays a pivotal role in this effort. We are dedicated to building meaningful relationships that extend beyond the confines of our academy, reaching into diverse sectors and demographics. Through these partnerships, we strive to create a network that enhances the accessibility and relevance of our training programs.

Central to our collaborative efforts is the alignment of values. GATSA actively seeks out partners who share our unwavering commitment to elevating diversity, equity, and inclusion in the field of social work. By partnering with organizations that embody these principles, we collectively contribute to creating a more inclusive, anti-racist, and equitable landscape for professional development.

We look forward to continuing and expanding these collaborative endeavors. Together, we aim to advance the shared values of social work, foster diversity, equity, and inclusion, and make a lasting impact on the broader community we serve.
A special thanks to our community partners, the NU System...

Counseling Department, University of Nebraska at Omaha
Department of Gerontology, University of Nebraska at Omaha
Gender and Sexuality Resource Center, University of Nebraska at Omaha
Munroe-Meyer Institute, University of Nebraska Medical Center
Nebraska Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program, University of Nebraska Medical Center
...and many more!
PROVISIONAL SUPERVISION AND CONSULTATION

In the dynamic landscape of mental health practice and licensure, Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy serves and supports professionals on their journey to full licensure. We focus on providing clinical supervision services to meet the ever-evolving needs of our behavioral health community.

At Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy (GATSA), we understand the pivotal role that clinical supervision plays in shaping competent and ethical mental health practitioners. Our program remains steadfast in its mission to guide individuals along their licensure journey while facilitating a deeper understanding of the nuances of clinical practice.

In addition to clinical supervision, GATSA expanded its offerings to include individual clinical consultation sessions. Whether participants are seeking guidance on clinical supervision, ethical considerations, ASWB exam preparation, or case consultation, our supervisors provide comprehensive and ethical exploration of these crucial topics.

Recognizing the importance of flexibility and accessibility, we revamped our supervision process by recruiting two new supervisors and implementing the use of Calendly, a user-driven online scheduling platform. This innovative approach provides participants with greater convenience and autonomy in booking sessions, ensuring a seamless scheduling experience tailored to their individual needs. Using this platform, more than 400 supervision and consultation appointments were scheduled in 2023.

400

Our commitment to accessibility and professional development for our clients extends beyond online scheduling. In 2023, we offered specialized training in reflective practice supervision techniques. These sessions were thoughtfully designed to align with the requirements set by the Nebraska Licensing Board, and offered participants a robust foundation for their professional development.

GATSA offers individual sessions for those seeking guidance on topics such as clinical supervision, ethical considerations, ASWB exam prep, and case consultation.
Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy
Provisional Supervisors

KATIE ROBBINS LICSW
Katie graduated with her MSW degree in 2009 and has been a clinical supervisor since 2013. Katie’s areas of specialization include end of life/grief, medical social work, trauma, interpersonal relationships, couples work, eating disorders, and crisis. Katie utilizes EMDR, IPT, and Gottman Method Level 2 Couples Therapy in practice.

KERSTEN BORER LIMHP, CMSW, LADC
Kersten graduated with her MSW degree in 1999 and has been a clinical supervisor since 2004. Kersten’s areas of specialization include addiction treatment, codependency treatment, juvenile delinquency, child welfare, adults in the criminal justice system, and trauma. Kersten utilizes EMDR, CBT, Motivational Interviewing, and DBT in practice.

LAURA SANCHEZ LICSW, LADC
Laura graduated with her MSW degree in 2014 and has been a clinical supervisor since 2020. Laura’s areas of specialization include addiction, trauma, and self-practice and focuses on providing culturally and linguistically appropriate care to her Latino and Spanish speaking clients.
ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH: ENGAGING IN SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS PRACTICE

The Entrepreneurship in Behavioral Health 2023 Conference served as a pivotal platform that provided professionals with the tools and insights essential for navigating the intricacies of behavioral health entrepreneurship.

This one-day conference, designed for behavioral health professionals venturing into small business ownership, unfolded as a transformative experience and marked a significant collaboration between Omaha West Rotary, the Nebraska Business Development Center, and the Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy.

With over 115 professionals from various facets of behavioral health in attendance, participants gained insights and practical knowledge across a spectrum of critical training areas. The event, facilitated by seasoned experts, delved into topics ranging from business plans and budgeting, credentialing, program evaluation, and branding to insurance, HR functions, documentation, record-keeping, public-speaking, and grant-writing.

Participants were offered a complimentary headshot captured by a professional photographer to enhance their professional profiles.

Engagement opportunities at the conference included professional presentations, a dynamic panel discussion, informal small group sessions, and strategic networking opportunities, fostering an environment of collaboration and knowledge exchange.
Our speakers, collaborators, and subject matter experts are dedicated to advancing knowledge and skills by providing comprehensive and relevant training content that caters to a diverse audience.
ASWB EXAM PREP

In 2023, our Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Exam Prep program experienced a transformation marked by significant growth, achievement, and unwavering dedication to the success of anyone pursuing full mental health licensure in Nebraska. This past year, our innovative program celebrated numerous milestones and accomplishments, shaping the landscape of exam preparation for provisionally licensed individuals, final-semester graduate students, and social work/mental health professionals.

Addressing barriers is a primary focus of our ASWB Exam Prep program. We acknowledge the disparities in exam pass rates based on factors such as race/ethnicity, gender, and many others. Through inclusive materials, personalized support, and a supportive learning environment, we aim to empower candidates from diverse backgrounds to succeed. By actively working to mitigate these disparities, we are striving to create a more equitable and inclusive profession for all aspiring mental health practitioners.

Exam pass rates collected by the ASWB (Figure B.) demonstrate the need for equity and support for diverse learners.

Figure B. 2018–2021 Clinical exam first-time pass rates by race/ethnicity and gender

One notable achievement in 2023 was the dedicated contribution of Abi Waldron, a graduate student worker, who played a pivotal role in creating test materials for publication. Abi’s diligent efforts included extensive research across various content areas of the licensure exam, enriching our resources and ensuring comprehensive coverage of exam intricacies.

Furthermore, we forged valuable connections with community and university partners to refine the delivery of our prep course. Through collaborative efforts, we streamlined our approach, culminating in the decision to offer the course as a comprehensive 200-page e-book. This innovative format ensures accessibility and flexibility for a diverse audience, aligning with our commitment to meeting the evolving needs of licensure candidates.

Our ASWB Exam Prep program will continue to provide unparalleled support and resources to participants, offering valuable insights into anxiety reduction strategies, personalized study plans, and comprehensive content outlines. Our interactive virtual sessions conducted on Zoom foster a supportive and effective learning environment, empowering participants to collaborate, engage with the material, and build confidence.

As we look ahead, our commitment to excellence remains concrete. We envision continued achievements in empowering individuals on their licensure journeys, offering innovative solutions, and fostering a community dedicated to success. The resilience and adaptability demonstrated by our ASWB Exam Prep program in 2023 serves as a testament to its enduring impact on the professional growth of many.
ONLINE IMPACT AND DIGITAL PRESENCE

In an era defined by connectivity and technological advancement, the Grace Abbott Training and Supervision Academy has experienced a remarkable online impact, transforming the landscape of our outreach and accessibility. Our digital footprint has expanded across various platforms, engaging professionals and fostering a vibrant online community.

Social Media Presence

On LinkedIn, our page garnered 282 page views, welcomed 127 unique visitors, and celebrated a dedicated network of 113 followers, highlighting the growing interest in our professional network.

Facebook has been a hub of interaction, with 8,616 visits, 32,385 total views, and a dedicated following of 1.9k followers. Instagram boasts 528 devoted followers. YouTube has been an immersive platform with 2,316 views and an impressive 523.4 watch hours, showcasing dynamic content that resonates with our audience.

Email Engagement

In the realm of direct communication, our emails have been a powerful tool, with 639,679 emails circulated through HubSpot. This extensive reach underscores our commitment to keeping our community informed, connected, and engaged.

Training and Participation

The impact of our online presence extends beyond numbers to the heart of our mission. GATSA conducted 38 comprehensive trainings, attracting a diverse and engaged audience of 3,514 participants. These sessions, facilitated through various online platforms, not only provided valuable insights but also reinforced our commitment to making education accessible to all.

"I found this training informative and helpful. I didn't know much about the topic and this training has sparked my interest!"
Continuing Education Units

Recognizing the importance of professional development, GATSA has proudly distributed 6,459 Continuing Education Units (CEUs). This accomplishment reflects our dedication to supporting the growth and competence of social workers and mental health professionals.

As we reflect on these statistics, we celebrate not only the numbers but the vibrant community that has emerged through our online platforms. Looking ahead, we are poised to further leverage technology to enhance accessibility, foster community engagement, and continue our mission of empowering professionals in the field.

The digital impact of GATSA is not just statistics; it is a testament to our commitment to excellence and inclusivity in the digital age.
ENGAGING WITH PURPOSE: EXPLORING CAREERS IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

With the successful attainment of BHECN’s Ambassador Career Engagement Proposal grant, GATSA gathered 100+ high school juniors and seniors from three Omaha high schools for an explorative all-day conference in October 2023. Engaging with Purpose: Exploring Careers in Behavioral Health amplified our mission to grow a strong behavioral health workforce for Nebraska.

98% of students either strongly or mostly agreed their knowledge of behavioral health careers increased because of this conference.

Throughout the conference, students from Omaha North, Central, and South High Schools enjoyed a comprehensive agenda including an exploration fair, engaging Q&A, and immersive breakout sessions. The breakouts, led by UNO faculty and community experts, explored various behavioral health fields such as social work, psychology, drug and alcohol counseling, nursing leadership and outreach, applied behavioral analysis, and counseling.

With 5 being "strongly agree," students ranked their increased interest in behavioral health careers at 4.26 overall.

Further, this event aimed to engage local high school students from underserved communities with behavioral health interests. In the future, we hope to expand this initiative to all six of Nebraska’s behavioral health regions, engaging rural partners.

"I learned a lot of super cool info and got new perspectives on mental health teachers and advocacy."
LOOKING FORWARD

As we reflect on our past accomplishments and the transformative journey we’ve undertaken, the future of GATSA shines bright with promise and possibility. Our vision encompasses a commitment to continued growth, innovation, and inclusivity as we strive to serve the evolving needs of behavioral health professionals.

Moving forward, we are dedicated to offering diverse training topics that cater to a wide spectrum of behavioral health practitioners. From urban centers to rural Nebraskan communities, we aim to expand our outreach and accessibility, ensuring that quality education and support are accessible to all. Our growth will always be guided by principles of equity and ethics.
Exciting ventures lie ahead, and we invite our audience to join us on this journey. With plans to launch our ASWB Exam Prep course, we are poised to prepare the future behavioral health workforce for success. Quality supervision remains at the heart of our mission, and we are committed to further enhancing our offerings to meet the evolving needs of our community. And we are actively working towards obtaining national accreditation, a testament to our unwavering commitment to excellence and professionalism.

As we look towards the horizon, we are filled with anticipation and optimism. Our future holds exciting opportunities, and we hope that each of you will be there to experience these milestones with us. Together, we will continue to shape the landscape of behavioral health education, empowerment, and innovation. The journey ahead promises to be nothing short of extraordinary, and we are eager to embark on it together.