



rosecrance®
Learning

SOLUTIONS SUMMIT:

Sustaining Resilient Youth

Brought to you by The Rosecrance Regional Substance Use
Prevention Integration Center (RSUPIC)

This summit is funded in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery through a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Co-Hosted by



Sponsored by



Welcome!

Thank you for joining us at the Solutions Summit: *Sustaining Resilient Youth*. Today, we bring together educators, mental health professionals, community leaders, and advocates committed to supporting and empowering our youth through effective prevention strategies and resilience-building approaches.

Rosecrance's Regional Substance Use Prevention Integration Center (RSUPIC) has created this one-day summit to explore new and inspiring avenues to support youth and families in our region. In a world where young people face unprecedented challenges, your presence here demonstrates your commitment to making a difference. This summit offers a unique opportunity to learn about the latest youth substance misuse trends, engage in meaningful dialogue with others dedicated to supporting young people, and be inspired by nationally known advocates.

What to Expect Today

Today's program features inspiring keynotes, practical breakout sessions, and valuable networking opportunities. From exploring trauma-informed approaches to understanding the latest in youth engagement strategies, each session is designed to provide you with actionable knowledge and tools to enhance your work with young people.

Continuing Education

This summit offers Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for qualified attendees. Five (5) hours of CEUs have been applied for through the Illinois Certification Board (ICB) in the following categories: **COUN I or II, PREV I or II, CARS I or II, CODP I or II, PCGC II, CCJP II, CCAP I, CRSS I or II, CPRS I or II, MAATP I or II, CFPP I, ATE, or CVSS II**. CEUs will also be provided for the following credentials:

- **LCSW** (Licensed Clinical Social Worker)
- **LSW** (Licensed Social Worker)
- **LCPC** (Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor)
- **LPC** (Licensed Professional Counselor)
- **Psychologist**

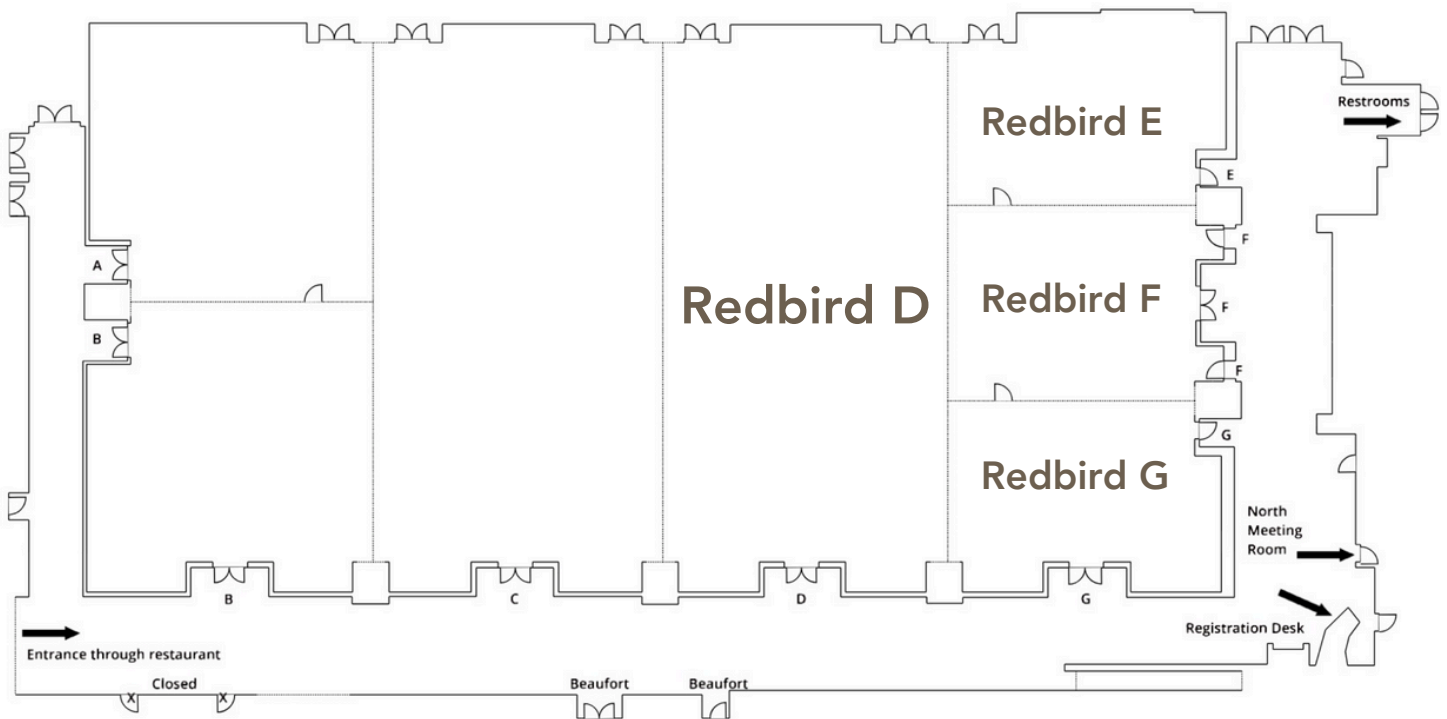
Please be sure to sign in for each session you attend and complete all required documentation.

Tag **#SolutionsSummit2025** and **@rosecrancenews** on your socials!

Thank you for joining,

The Rosecrance Team

Map



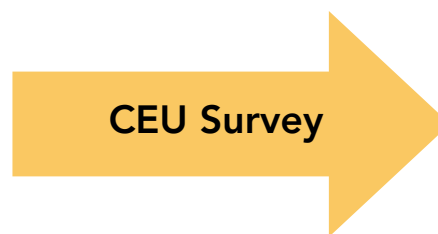
Wi-Fi

There are two available Wi-Fi networks:
MarriottBonvoy_Conference
and
MarriottBonvoy_Public
Neither requires a password.

CEUs

To obtain your CEU credits, please be sure to complete all of the following steps:

- Sign in at the registration table when you check in
- Sign in to each breakout session you attend – there will be a sign-in sheet in each breakout room
- Sign out at the registration table when you leave at the end of the day
- Scan the QR code to complete the event feedback survey. Your input helps us improve future programming.



Completion of the survey is required to receive CEU credits.

Data Asset Tool

Visit the new Rosecrance Regional Asset Map and share your thoughts with us! Scan the QR code below. Feedback is welcomed via email to ca@thirdhorizon.co



Sustaining Resilient Youth

8:30 - 9:00 AM

Registration, AM Refreshments and Light Breakfast
Lobby and Redbird D

9:00 - 9:15 AM

Welcome
Melissa Pappas (*Redbird D*)

9:15 - 10:15 AM

Opening Keynote
Kim Laube (*Redbird D*)

10:15 - 10:30 AM

Break

10:30 - 11:30 AM

Breakout Sessions: 1
Kym Laube (*Redbird E*), Joe Trotter (*Redbird F*),
Dr. Lynda Gibson (*Redbird G*)

11:30 - 12:30 PM

Lunch

12:30 - 1:30 PM

Breakout Sessions: 2
Kersten Wilson (*Redbird E*), Christopher Druce Jones
(*Redbird F*), Gordon Bender (*Redbird G*)

1:30 - 1:45 PM

Break

1:45 - 2:45 PM

Breakout Sessions: 3
Scott Hayes (*Redbird E*), Logan Lehmann (*Redbird F*),
Abby Nelson (*Redbird G*)

2:45 - 3:00 PM

Break

3:00 - 4:00 PM

Closing & Keynote
Mario Bonds (*Redbird D*)

Sustaining Resilient Youth

8:30 AM - 9:00 AM

Registration, AM Refreshments and Light Breakfast

9:00 AM - 9:15 AM

WELCOME

Speaker: Melissa Pappas - *Executive Director, Rosecrance Central Illinois*

9:15 AM - 10:15 AM

OPENING KEYNOTE

Unbreakable Spirit: From ACEs to the C-Suite -- Cultivating Resilience, Hope, and the Warrior Heart

Kym Laube is the Executive Director of Human Understanding Growth Services, Inc., HUGS, Inc., located in Westhampton Beach, NY. In this position she brings over 30 years of substance use prevention knowledge and expertise, leading the organization to provide a full array of multidimensional prevention services. Kym is a national trainer and speaker, working with notable leaders in prevention including CADCA.

Having participated in the HUGS, Inc. Teen Institute program in 1986 as a high school student, Kym understands firsthand, the profound impact, lifelong influence and leadership skills the Teen Institute program provides to young people. From student leader to Executive Director in 2002, Kym's mission has been to empower others to seek their full potential and become agents of change in the world. Kym offers dynamic, passionate and interactive keynotes, trainings and workshops for large and small groups with an uncanny ability to talk with and not at people. Annually, Kym presents to over 25,000 individuals, young and old across our great country.

Kym's unwavering commitment to improving the lives of young people extends beyond her executive office and can be seen in the many leadership roles she holds. She is active on various local, state and national boards and task forces and served on the NYS Governor Opiate Task Force. Most notable is her personal recovery and commitment to push individuals to make the space better wherever they are. She lives in Westhampton Beach with her husband, and way too many dogs.



Kym Laube
Human Understanding
Growth Services, Inc.
(HUGS, Inc.)

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 1

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Positive Youth Engagement and Development: Navigating Isolation, Fear, and Reconnection

The return to in-person learning has revealed the profound and lasting impact of the "isolation years" on our youth. While some students have thrived and stepped into leadership roles, many others have retreated into silence, feeling unseen and unheard. Educators, clinicians, and youth workers have witnessed firsthand the toll that prolonged stress, grief, social isolation, and ongoing crises have taken—not only on young people but on families, colleagues, communities, and even themselves.

The challenges are stark: anxiety, depression, substance misuse, and grief continue to escalate, with the full impact yet to unfold. As leaders, clinicians, healers, and caregivers, the question becomes: How do we reach, engage, and support our youth while simultaneously navigating our own challenges?

Objectives:

1. Explore the ways isolation has shaped the experiences of youth and impacted our professional fields.
2. Develop practical tools for meaningful engagement—both virtually and in person.
3. Discover strategies to foster resilience and growth in the face of ongoing stress and crises



Kym Laube

Human Understanding
Growth Services, Inc.
(HUGS, Inc.)

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 1

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

What Youth-Serving Professionals Need to Know About Opioid Overdose—and Why It Can Save Lives

This training provides participants with essential knowledge about opioids and their use, chemical dependence, how to recognize the signs of an overdose, and how to respond effectively—including post-resuscitation support. While the content applies to all communities, it is particularly valuable for youth-serving professionals and those involved in substance use prevention. The training equips participants with the awareness and skills needed to respond to crises and support safer, more informed environments—key components of effective prevention ecosystems.

Joe Trotter is an employee of the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District serving as their Harm Reduction Program Coordinator. Joe has been working in the field of harm reduction and disease prevention for since 2009. He has expanded syringe access and overdose prevention in East Central Illinois and serves as an advocate for harm reduction practice in the public health field.



Joe Trotter

Champaign-Urbana
Public Health District

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 1

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Supporting Youth Exposed to Trauma: How Schools and Community Organizations Can Make a Difference

This workshop will explore how schools and community organizations can play a pivotal role in supporting youth who have been exposed to trauma. Whether stemming from personal experiences, family issues, or community violence, trauma can profoundly impact a young person's emotional, academic, and social development. However, with the right tools and resources, these institutions can help youth heal, thrive, and overcome the challenges trauma presents.

The session will provide practical strategies for creating trauma-sensitive environments where young people feel safe, heard, and supported. We'll also explore how to build resilience, teach coping mechanisms, and collaborate effectively with families and community resources to ensure holistic care. This workshop is designed for educators, community leaders, counselors, social workers, and anyone involved in supporting youth. Together, we'll discuss evidence-based practices, share success stories, and create a roadmap for implementing trauma-informed support systems that make a real difference in the lives of vulnerable youth.

Dr. Lynda Gibson is a Clinical Child Psychologist, Clinical Assistant Professor, and Director of the Psychological Services Center at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Gibson is also the program director for the Safe First Steps School, Parent, and Community Engagement (SPACE) Program, which is a mental health initiative that was developed to support families who are experiencing intergenerational trauma. Dr. Gibson's research and clinical work focus on risk and resiliency factors in African American and Latinx communities, barriers to treatment for underserved families, early exposure to trauma and community violence, strategies for addressing behavioral health disparities, building of community partnerships, and strategies for creating trauma-informed schools.



Dr. Lynda Gibson

University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 2

12:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Combatting Compassion Fatigue

This training will seek to present an overview of compassion fatigue. The participant will learn a historical reference of this experience as well as the contributing factors, symptomology, and connection to burnout. The participant will also learn ways to combat its effects on the individual through short-term and long-term coping strategies within varying work settings.

Chaplain Christopher T. Druce Jones serves as Director of Chaplaincy for Rosecrance Behavioral Health, providing spiritual leadership to Substance Use/Mental Health residential adult and adolescent clients. He provides spirituality care services through weekly spirituality lectures, individual spiritual counseling, special faith connection services, and spiritual support to staff. In addition to spiritual care services, he also facilitates groups on loss and grief and vicarious trauma. Chaplain Chris has extensive experience in administration, organizational management and leadership, as well as, leadership development and group facilitation. His areas of specialization are loss and grief, vicarious trauma, and organizational leadership and revitalization. Chaplain Chris is also a United Methodist clergy of over 20 years. He pastored churches within the Northern Illinois Conference. Chaplain Chris is also pastor of Christ the Carpenter UMC in Rockford, Illinois. Chaplain Chris is a United States Army/Army Reserve veteran. He earned a BA in Philosophy and Religion from Dillard University in New Orleans, Louisiana and a Master of Divinity from the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa.



**Chaplain Christopher
T. Druce Jones**

Rosecrance Behavioral
Health

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 2

12:30 AM - 1:30 PM

What's With Teen Vaping? A Nicotine and Cannabis Vaping Overview

This session will discuss nicotine and cannabis vaping, what they are, and how misuse and addiction develop. We will also discuss how e-cigarettes and cannabis are marketed to teens. We'll look into types of vapes and cannabis vapes, as well as flavorings tempting teens. Lastly, we will discuss prevention and treatment strategies for teens around vaping.

Gordon Bender, B.S., is a Lead Prevention Specialist at Project Oz. He has provided substance use prevention education for thousands of students in multiple grade levels throughout McLean County. Prior to his work in prevention education, he worked as an addiction treatment counselor. He is passionate about understanding current trends among youth, and when school districts expressed a clear need for more information about this topic, he extensively researched teen vaping and began providing additional presentations. In addition to teaching youth, he has also provided education about vaping for parents and community groups.



Gordon Bender
Project Oz

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 2

12:30 AM - 1:30 PM

From Potential to Power: The Impact of YouthBuild

Celebrating 30 years, YouthBuild McLean County is one of the largest and longest-standing YouthBuild programs in the nation. With an emphasis on education and job skills training, the YouthBuild program helps undereducated and marginalized youth make a difference in their community. By providing alternative educational pathways, vocational training, and wraparound support services, YouthBuild empowers young people to build a brighter future while reducing risks associated with drug and alcohol abuse. The program's holistic approach—combining mental health services, leadership development, and community engagement—helps participants break cycles of poverty and dangerous behaviors. YouthBuild fosters resilience, self-sufficiency, and a sense of purpose, equipping young people with the skills and confidence to succeed beyond the program. More than just a program, YouthBuild is a catalyst for transformation, turning potential into power and strengthening both individuals and communities.

Kersten Wilson is a Bloomington-Normal native who is passionate about serving her community by fostering connections to create meaningful solutions. With over 30 years of experience in the recreation, small business and non-profit sectors, Kersten brings a unique blend of expertise and service oriented leadership to every role she takes on.

Kersten is a proud graduate of Illinois State University and Leadership McLean County and thrives on teaching, mentoring and empowering others. Whether building community partnerships or enjoying time with her family in nature, her goal is to always make a positive impact in the lives of those around her.

Kersten is married with two children who are attending Illinois State University and Heartland Community College. Kersten is currently serving as the development specialist for YouthBuild McLean County and is thrilled to be able to share with you what YouthBuild does to support and empower youth in our community.



Kersten Wilson
YouthBuild McLean
County

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 3

1:45 PM - 2:45 PM

The Experiential Side of DBT

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and Therapeutic Recreation (TR) are clinical interventions that help support the growth of clients while in treatment. Applying and continuing to support these skills is imperative to success outside of a clinical setting. We will explore what DBT and TR is from a clinical lens, discover the 4 core areas of DBT and learn ways to apply these skills with students.

Outcomes:

- Understand the role of DBT in treating behavioral health conditions
- Understand the 4 core areas of DBT and associated skills
- Understand how DBT can be implemented utilizing Therapeutic Recreation and experiential learning
- Utilize TR as a tool for implementing DBT skills

Abby Nelson coordinates therapeutic recreation programs that guide adolescent and adult clients toward healthy habits, connection, and leisure activities across Rosecrance. She earned her Bachelor of Science in secondary education and her Master of Science in therapeutic recreation. Abby joined Rosecrance in 2004 as a recreation specialist facilitating adolescent therapeutic groups in recreation, fitness and nutrition, and life skills. She has led team-building groups focused on low ropes course facilitation and visual arts groups, as well as other experiential therapy activities. Abby is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor. She is also a regular conference speaker, having presented for the Illinois Association of Behavioral Health, American Therapeutic Recreation Association Annual, and the Midwest Symposium on Therapeutic Recreation.



**Abby Nelson, M.S.,
CTRS, CADC, QMHP**

Rosecrance

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 3

1:45 PM - 2:45 PM

EYPC and Local Alcohol Policy Change: The Right Partnership for You!

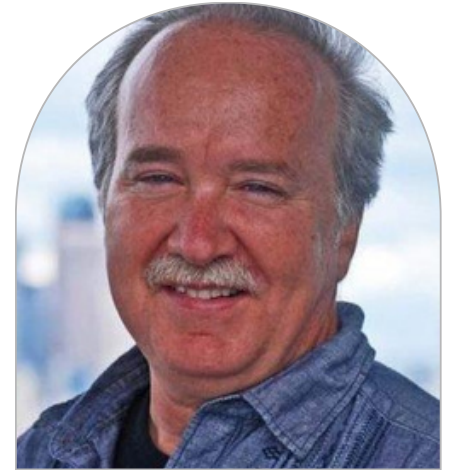
Is your community considering strengthening your local environment to reduce alcohol misuse through policy change? If so, engaging your local youth in your efforts with the support of Engaging Youth for Positive Change (EYPC) can be a key component of success!

EYPC, a youth-oriented policy change curriculum, carefully guides youth through the process of getting a local alcohol policy passed in their community. During EYPC, youth identify a problem and a policy solution, collect and analyze data, and present to local leaders, giving young people the skills, confidence, and experience they need to become effective advocates for positive social change.

This session will provide with an overview of the Engaging Youth for Positive Change curriculum, share past successes with the program and leave you excited about engaging your local youth in increasing your community's commitment to reducing alcohol misuse through local policy change.

Dr. Scott P. Hays (PhD, Florida State, 1991) is Director of Research and Development with the Strategic Collaboration Group, Inc. Dr. Hays is a political scientist and the developer of the Engaging Youth for Positive Change program, a project that began in 2003 with youth focusing on the ultimately successful effort to pass local ordinances making local businesses smokefree. Over his career, Dr. Hays was a professor of political science at Southern Illinois University and later worked as a Senior Research Scientist at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Dr. Hays' work focuses at the intersection of local communities, civic engagement, and health. He has had several research grants to study innovation and local policy, the governance of public health departments and the implementation, evaluation, and assessment of EYPC.



Dr. Scott P. Hays

Strategic Collaboration
Group, Inc.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 3

1:45 PM - 2:45 PM

Neurodivergence and Self Medication

This session explores the complex issue of self-medication among neurodivergent people between 18-25 (some research used will include up to 30 years of age). This session will cover the underlying factors driving this behavior, including undiagnosed conditions, limited access to mental health services, stigma & misinformation, and the unique sensory and emotional challenges faced by this population.

- Those with a neurodiverse diagnosis often report low mental health & high psychological distress (Hotez et al., 2023)
- In one study, 76% of participants 18-25 reported using cannabis for psychological issues (Nicolaidis et al., 2022)
- Still a lack of specific research that focuses on the cross-sections of neurodivergence & self-medication

I received my Bachelors in Sociology from Eastern Illinois University in 2018 & my Masters of Social Work from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2020. I received my LSW in 2021 and began working as a mental health therapist. I worked in that field until May 2024. I began adjuncting at EIU in August 2023 & made the switch to EIU full-time in August 2024. I am currently an Instructor for the Human Services department as well as the Field Director for the incoming BSW program. My professional interests include disability advocacy, LGBTQIA+ and women's rights.

I live with my husband & our two dogs, Georgia & Rudy. I like to spend time with my family & friends and you can typically find me watching BravoTV, making something on my Cricut or hanging around with my loved ones.



Logan Lehmann, LSW
Eastern Illinois University

CLOSING KEYNOTE

1:45 PM - 2:45 PM

Courage, Creativity, & Determination: The Mario Bonds Story

We think we fully comprehend that courage, creativity and determination are critical to our success. However, you will quickly see how much we all still have to learn about the innate power of these concepts when you hear the story of Mario Arnauz Bonds. Bonds experienced a childhood the likes of which few of us can even imagine—suffering abuse on a number of levels, abandonment and eventually, homelessness. Amazingly, one thing he never suffered from was hopelessness. Instead of allowing these setbacks to define him, Bonds utilized them to propel himself forward. His session will discuss his philosophy that triumph and success are still possible, no matter the obstacle, with sufficient courage, creativity and determination to overcome the odds. His experiences and lessons will motivate audiences, both personally and professionally, to push the envelope, overcome any difficulty and ultimately, make the choices that will set them along the path to achieving their goals.

Mario Bonds is the creator of the “I am Human Too Campaign,” an anti-bullying movement centered around empowering music, videos, and uplifting true stories. Having overcome a childhood marred by abuse, abandonment, the loss of his parents, and the loss of his eyesight by age 9, Bonds is the author of “Without Sight but Full of Vision,” an inspirational childhood memoir that covers his triumph over these adversities. He is the resident journalist for Jenleeion Magazine and has become a highly-sought keynote and live performance act. Bonds never suffered from hopelessness and will inspire you and leave you wanting to push the envelope, take hold of dreams and keep going.



Mario Bonds

“I am Human Too”
Campaign