



# 28th Annual OCD Conference



Spanning three days in San Francisco this past July, the 28th Annual OCD Conference brought together community members from all walks of life. With support from title sponsor Neurobehavioral Institute (NBI) and NBI Ranch, the Conference had over 1,900 attendees from 14 countries across the globe. Individuals with lived experience, their loved ones, clinicians and providers treating OCD and related disorders, and researchers enjoyed a robust and outstanding program of talks, sessions, and support groups for all ages.

The Conference featured a professional plenary on OCD and racism delivered by this year’s IOCDF Patricia Perkins Service Award recipient, Monnica T. Williams, PhD. Additionally, Katharine A. Phillips, MD was presented with the IOCDF Career Achievement Award for conducting groundbreaking scientific research on body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) and for her unwavering commitment to supporting the OCD and related disorders community.

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The mission of the IOCDF is to ensure that no one affected by OCD and related disorders suffers alone. Our community provides help, healing, and hope.

Our vision is that everyone impacted by OCD and related disorders has immediate access to effective treatment and support.

The IOCDF provides up-to-date education and resources, strengthens community engagement, delivers quality professional training, and advances groundbreaking research.

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# WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

**We would love your feedback on the OCD Newsletter!**

Give us your opinions at [iocdf.org/newslettersurvey](http://iocdf.org/newslettersurvey)

You can enter for a chance to win a \$50 Visa gift card by completing the brief survey.

## President's Letter

by Susan Boaz

It's autumn! As the weather changes, we look back to see what we have accomplished this year, and we look forward to what we can do in the months to come.

We completed our 28th Annual OCD Conference in July, and I

extend my heartfelt appreciation to everyone who contributed to its tremendous success. The IOCDF's mission is to ensure that no one affected by OCD and related disorders suffers alone. The Annual OCD Conference embodies the essence of this mission, providing a haven of help, healing, and hope to over 1,900 new and returning attendees.

This year's Conference was especially exciting to attend, as there were so many new attendees and first-time presenters who brought new energy and interesting ideas. To see new presenters working with many of our experienced presenters embodied a spirit of mentorship that was hopeful for the future. I am genuinely joyful to attend this conference each year and to witness first-hand the life-changing connections formed over that weekend. One of my favorite moments was walking the exhibit hall and seeing the dedication of everyone to offer services and information. I met a young sibling, Ella Kim, who wrote a brilliant kids book, *How to Beat Bully Brain: A Story About OCD*. It is wonderful! Our community's courage in speaking or attending is advocacy in action.

The highlight of the conference this year was the honoring of a leader in OCD research. Monnica T. Williams, PhD received the IOCDF Patricia Perkins Service Award as a longtime and active contributor to the IOCDF and the larger community. Dr. Williams' groundbreaking research into how OCD and related disorders affect people across different races, ethnicities, and cultures has transformed how the field thinks about OCD both in the therapist office and in research studies. She is a founding member of our DEI Action Committee and a leader in establishing our Behavior Therapy Training Institute (BTI) for Treating OCD in Communities of Color. I am elated to see her receive recognition for the massive impact she has made over her career.

Just as nature transforms its scenery during this season, our community too undergoes continuous growth. Part of that growth is the addition of two new IOCDF board members: Crystal Fulwood and Ben Gambrel.

Crystal Fulwood is a passionate advocate for social change and community development with a proven track record of leadership and a deep commitment to making a positive impact across the public and private sectors. Having dedicated her career to building mental health awareness and support for under-resourced communities throughout the US, she brings a wealth of expertise and a passion for inspiring sustainable change to our organization. As a new board member, Crystal is excited to leverage her skills, knowledge, and network to advance our organization's goals further.

Ben Gambrel has spent over two decades working for large public companies in a variety of roles, including strategy development and execution at a corporate and operating level. He has been actively assisting the IOCDF to develop our Vision, Mission and Strategy for the last 18 months and is excited to join the board to continue this work on our strategy.

Please join us in welcoming Crystal and Ben to the organization as we look forward to all they will accomplish in their new roles.



As we witness the change of seasons this year, we will also encounter change in our community as we identify and advance our strategic goals for the IOCDF.

A dedicated group of IOCDF board members, staff, and community members is discussing how we can fulfill the IOCDF's vision and are outlining strategic goals for the organization to ensure everyone impacted by OCD and related disorders has immediate access to effective treatment and support. We know that 2% of the population suffers from OCD, and yet both awareness of the disorder and access to care are still significant challenges. At the same time, we are acutely aware that change is needed to grow to move towards this vision.

You will hear us talking about strategy a lot in the coming months. You may wonder why since we already have such great training programs, conferences, advocates, and online content. We are fortunate to partner with many other organizations who are trying to solve this dual issue of awareness and access. Our amazing programming has set a great foundation. The question we are now asking is how to impact the future in a big way, so that everyone has access to care. That's going to take some time, but we believe it can be done!

While we are outlining our strategy for the future, we are also excited to search for our next IOCDF Executive Director to execute those goals. To aid us in our search, the IOCDF has hired WittKieffer, a leading executive search and advisory firm. This is an exciting opportunity for a mission-driven individual to substantially impact the lives of those affected by OCD, work closely with the President and Board of Directors to shape and execute the organization's vision, and implement comprehensive strategic plans for the IOCDF. If you know of anyone who would like to apply for the Executive Director position, submit inquiries, nominations, and resumes to [IOCDF@wittkieffer.com](mailto:IOCDF@wittkieffer.com).

As we move forward, we are committed to listening to what is needed by everyone impacted by OCD and to learning from each of you. While we celebrate our growth and progress, we also embrace the changes that lie ahead, knowing that we are not alone. Our collective efforts have undoubtedly sown seeds of hope and understanding, letting us continue to reach out to one another to ensure that no one feels isolated on their journey

Take good care of yourself first — and we look forward to joining you on the journey to care for all,

Susan Boaz

President, IOCDF Board of Directors

And the mom of a fabulous young adult (how did that happen?)

## FROM THE FOUNDATION

### Highlights from 28th Annual OCD Conference *(continued from front cover)*



Following these award presentations, we were honored to have comedian, author, and actress Maria Bamford deliver this year's Keynote Address. Maria is known for her starring roles in the semi-autobiographical Netflix comedy series *Lady Dynamite* and cult hit web series *The Maria Bamford Show*, as well as her voiceover work for shows like *BoJack Horseman* and *Bob's Burgers*. Her hilarious and honest look at her experience with OCD and intrusive thoughts was an uplifting end to the day before presentations of this year's Hero, Youth Hero, and Illumination Awards.

This year's Hero Award was presented to Kim Vincenty, Executive Director of JACK Mental Health Advocacy and former president of OCD Jacksonville, an Affiliate of the IOCDF. Kim is a mother, wife, OCD advocate, speaker, and support group facilitator who has spent the past decade fostering community and helping families find the best resources for mental health education, intervention, and recovery. Her love and support of her son Jack, who began his battle with OCD nearly 20 years ago, led her to dedicate her career to supporting not only her own but all families helping a loved one with OCD and related disorders.

The Youth Hero Award was presented to Jayden Helberg, a courageous young man who created a stop-motion video about what it's like having and facing OCD (*Watch it at [iocdf.org/jayden](http://iocdf.org/jayden)*). His willingness to share his story inspired thousands of viewers around the world. Closer to home, his mother was inspired to face her own OCD as a result of Jayden's bravery, calling Jayden her hero.

Finally, this year's Illumination Award was presented to Ari Staprans Leff, known professionally as Lauv, a singer and songwriter best known for his breakout hit, "I Like Me Better." As a result of his own battle with depression, anxiety, and OCD, he founded the Blue Boy Foundation, which engages in initiatives that seek to amplify a message of positivity and raise awareness around the challenges faced by people struggling with their mental health.

The IOCDF is proud of the success of this year's Conference, bringing our community together for a truly one-of-a-kind, life-changing event. We will continue to provide help, healing, and hope through our future Conference programming and look forward to bringing together the OCD and related disorders community for years to come. 🕒

## Neurobehavioral Institute (NBI): Proud Title Sponsor of the 28th Annual OCD Conference

by Jonathan Hoffman, PhD, Founder & Chief Clinical Officer at NBI, and Founder at NBI Ranch



The core reason why NBI has been a title sponsor of the IOCDF's biggest yearly event is simple — we truly believe in the mission and values of this great organization and its dedicated staff.

We love how the collaborative nature of the Annual OCD Conference joins together patients, families, researchers, and clinicians in a vibrant community of support, advocacy, and hope. Whether we are presenting, in the audience, or just enjoying random conversations or a coffee break with attendees and colleagues, we always find the Conference to be a stimulating experience and return to NBI refreshed and inspired to expand and improve our services. In fact, we aspire to infuse the spirit of the IOCDF into all of NBI's services, including our intensive OCD and anxiety treatment program and NBI Ranch.

Serving as a title sponsor also makes us feel even more connected to the IOCDF's amazing contributions on behalf of all impacted by OCD and related conditions — it is no accident that public awareness of OCD and its effective treatment has increased so much in recent years!

Not only does participating in the Annual OCD Conference as title sponsor increase our visibility, but, more importantly, it provides NBI with a unique opportunity to support the IOCDF's incredible and ever-evolving story. Sincerely, it's our pleasure!

# An Advocate’s Eye View of the IOCDF’s Annual OCD Conference

by Summer Contreras



The Annual OCD Conference takes place every year in a different location across the United States, usually in the second week of July. The 28th Annual OCD Conference was held in San Francisco, California. I had attended two previous conferences, but this was my first Conference as an IOCDF Advocate. I attended the Conference by myself, not knowing many people. Little did I know how many connections I would make in the upcoming days! I’d like to share with you some of my favorite moments.

After seeing the Golden Gate Bridge on Thursday afternoon with a small group of advocates I had just met, I had the opportunity to volunteer for the IOCDF Advocate Booth next to the Exhibit Hall. There, I answered arriving attendees’ questions about the Conference and shared tips on how to make the most of their Conference experience. In just one short hour, I conversed with several different attendees from all walks of life. For many of these attendees, it was their first Conference and they were eager to squeeze as much as they could out of their weekend. It was rewarding to share with these folks how empowering the Conference can be in helping us form connections with other sufferers and learn more tools in our fight against OCD.

As a new Advocate, I was perhaps most anticipating the Advocate luncheon taking place on Friday. I had heard of several of these amazing Advocates already — Ethan Smith, Liz McIngvale, Val Andrews, Tom Smalley, Erika McCoy, to name a few — but I had not met many of them in person yet. This offered me the rare opportunity to connect and mingle with Advocates old and new from all across the country. It felt empowering to see and hear of these Advocates’ passion projects, and for us to come together over our common cause of spreading awareness of OCD. And these connections all happened over good food!

But my favorite moment of all happened during a Conference session that Friday. After the luncheon, I attended a session called “Beyond Treatment — Finding Yourself During Your OCD Recovery Journey.” This session consisted of a moderated panel of young adults with OCD who shared with attendees how they learned to navigate life beyond OCD. During the session, one of the young adults shared how instrumental her mother was in her recovery. At this point, I was getting emotional, because I lost my mother before I entered into treatment for my OCD. I thought about how wonderful it was for this young person to have her mother to support her through her recovery journey, and how much it would have benefited me to have also had my mother during my own recovery. I shared this with the panelists, working through some tears. At the end of the session, the mother of one of the panelists who was in the audience with me approached me and said simply, “Can I give you a mom hug?” It was a special moment of understanding and connection. She understood both how hard it was to have OCD — her daughter having had it severely — and how difficult it must have been for me to work through my OCD without my mom. After our “mom hug,” I had to go upstairs to return to my hotel room, because I had broken down in tears. But they were tears of healing.

I wonder how many other heartwarming moments like my “mom hug” moment have happened throughout Annual OCD Conferences over the years. The Conference is special in part because thousands of attendees, most of whom did not know each other, gather together and understand one another in a way that most others do not. As former national IOCDF spokesperson and board member Jeff Bell has put it, the IOCDF’s Annual OCD Conference is like one big family reunion.

Even without my mother, I certainly felt like I had a family when I attended the Annual OCD Conference. I know I am not alone in my journey with OCD. And that’s why I advocate and attend these Conferences. If you have never been to an Annual OCD Conference, I encourage you to attend. You never know what special moments await you. 🧡

## PUBLIC POLICY CORNER

### Fall Public Policy Update

*Happy fall to all our public policy advocates! In this edition of our corner, we want to highlight two key populations within our advocacy efforts — students and diverse populations.*

It is back to school season, and we know that OCD is often an unwelcome guest in the classroom. Thus, we were excited to add our voice in support of several pieces of legislation aimed at improving the mental health of students of all ages. Read more about three of these bills below:

#### **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR STUDENTS ACT (H.R.3713/S.1884)**

The Mental Health Services for Students Act would provide on-site school and community-based mental health services to public school students, helping schools and families to identify students who need mental health services and connect them with care. More specifically, this bill provides funding for schools to build partnerships with healthcare providers, child welfare agencies, and other community-based service systems, as well as training for teachers to identify the signs and symptoms of mental health issues. The bill also supports development of best practices for the delivery of mental health care in school-based settings.

#### **IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS IN SCHOOLS ACT (H.R.3331/S.754)**

The Improving Mental Health and Wellness in Schools Act seeks to amend an existing bill — the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act — to add in mental health promotion and education elements into the bill's programs and policies, which largely focus on physical health (e.g., lunch programs, physical activity, etc.). Additionally, the bill includes federal technical assistance (from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)) to assist in the integration of mental health within local school wellness policies, currently administered by the USDA. This will ensure that school personnel are adequately equipped to meet the mental health needs of their students.

#### **HIGHER EDUCATION MENTAL HEALTH ACT (H.R.3451/S.1665)**

While the above bills focused on the creation of programs/services and/or technical assistance for the creation of programs/services, the Higher Education Mental Health Act is all about increasing our knowledge base to inform future practice. This bill seeks to establish a

national multidisciplinary commission to learn more about the mental health concerns facing students at institutions of higher education (e.g., colleges, universities). The commission would be tasked with examining and reporting on services available to students with mental health concerns and the current policies in place to assist them to remain in school and complete their degrees, as well as providing recommendations for improving mental health services for higher education students.

Issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are central to the IOCDF's mission and part and parcel of everything we do as an organization. Public policy advocacy is no exception, and we were especially glad to support legislation seeking to address the mental health disparities we know exist in diverse populations — both within our OCD community, and in the wider mental health community as a whole. Read more about two of these bills below:

#### **PURSUING EQUITY IN MENTAL HEALTH ACT (H.R.3548/S.1700)**

The Pursuing Equity in Mental Health Act seeks to authorize \$995 million in grants and other funding to systematically address the mental health disparities faced by Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) youth in the U.S. This funding will go towards supporting research, improving the pipeline of culturally appropriate providers, building outreach programs that reduce stigma, and developing a training program for providers to effectively manage bias and reduce disparities in access to and delivery of mental health care for BIPOC youth.

#### **MENTAL HEALTH FOR LATINOS ACT (H.R.4884/S.2476)**

The Mental Health for Latinos Act would require SAMHSA to develop and implement an outreach and education strategy to promote behavioral and mental health among Latino and Hispanic populations in the US. The bill would also require SAMHSA to report on the success of this strategy annually, including metrics on the behavioral and mental health outcomes among Latino and Hispanic populations. ①

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*As always, we invite you to visit our Public Policy Advocacy page at [iocdf.org/public-policy](https://iocdf.org/public-policy) to read more about our work in this area. You can also sign up for email notifications about upcoming public policy events, action alerts, and other ways to get involved. Remember — your voice matters, and you can make a difference!*

## This is Me Trying: Overcoming OCD & Fundraising for the IOCDF

by Lily Grouf



*At the young age of nine, I watched from afar with my family as hurricanes overtook and ruined the lives of thousands in our country. Homes were lost, lives were in danger, food was hard to come by, and there was a call for help.*

I had a strong urge to help, but what could I do to change the outcome of this terrifying natural disaster? Of course there was the option of a lemonade stand, but that would just make enough money for about two Happy Meals. While that could have made a small difference, it wouldn't make the difference I was hoping to make. After some time, I landed on the idea of a yard sale; it could raise a sufficient amount of money while recycling clothes, toys, books, and more. Friends and family stepped up and donated many items to sell.

After the success of our first yard sale in raising funds, I knew this was something I wanted to continue doing. But as I was working to support others, my OCD was having an increasingly negative impact on my life.

Two years after that first yard sale, as I was starting sixth grade, my OCD was stronger than ever. It would take me double the amount of time to finish a homework assignment because I was erasing my writing until I deemed it perfect. I hated reading because I had to re-read sentences until I felt it was perfect. I had to make sure the bottles on my counter were positioned perfectly. In the words of Taylor Swift, it felt like, "I had the shiniest wheels, [and] now they [were] rusting."

Soon after this started, my parents introduced me to the idea of therapy — well, they sent me there against my will. But knowing what I know now, I would have chosen that path over and over again. I've had multiple therapists and each one of them has taught me how to overcome some of my biggest and most daunting challenges with OCD. Through the support of my parents, and life-changing resources, I was able to reclaim my life.

While my OCD still exists in my everyday life, it's nothing like it was before. Now I am able to focus on doing the things I love, like giving back. I held another yard sale with the goal of helping others access life-changing resources for OCD. I was incredibly lucky to have had access to these resources and recognize that many aren't as fortunate. Through my fundraising, I hope to raise awareness and support research, while helping others in their war with OCD. I raised over \$6,000 for the International OCD Foundation (IOCDF) to continue providing education and resources to ensure that no one affected by OCD and related disorders suffers alone. You can give back, too! Anyone can start their own fundraiser for the IOCDF. Visit [iocdf.org/diy](https://iocdf.org/diy) to learn more and get started. 📍

*Lily Grouf is a junior in high school who has found a passion for advocating for others with OCD. She was diagnosed four years ago and wants to provide others with access to life-changing resources.*

Questions about fundraising? Contact [donations@iocdf.org](mailto:donations@iocdf.org)!

See all of the ways to support the IOCDF at [iocdf.org/waystogive](https://iocdf.org/waystogive).

## FROM THE FRON TLINES

# Breaking the Chains: My Personal Story from Being Imprisoned by OCD to Thriving in Life While Having a Disability

by Kathryn Blalock



*Having a disability can be a burden on its own, but throw OCD into the mix and life becomes a whirlwind. It seems impossible to manage the daily struggles of living with a genetic condition and having severe OCD, but nothing is impossible.*

I was born with Bardet-Biedl syndrome (BBS). This condition can affect many different functions of the human body, but in my case, my vision is affected the most. I'm blind, having just a 10-degree field of vision, otherwise best described as "looking through a straw." My vision disability exacerbated my OCD symptoms. I could not see what was in my path or if I was clean, and this fear became all-consuming and even paralyzing at times. I also feared losing my remaining eyesight — something completely out of my control. However, I could control how clean I was, and this tiny bit of feeling in control quickly spiraled into severe contamination fears. OCD took away the one, most vital tool I had: my cane. Compared to BBS, OCD was a huge hurdle.

My OCD symptoms started when I was a child, which included hoarding my Barney the Dinosaur toys and wanting things to be "just right." For example, my parents' thumbs had to be exactly on the corners of the pages when they would read me a bedtime story.

As I grew older, I developed contamination fears including fears of raw meat, chicken, eggs, and poop. In middle school, I called my mom daily to take me home to shower because I felt dirty. During high school, I often cried due to high anxiety. I was teased and harassed for my OCD and vision disability. I needed extra-large textbooks with large print. Kids inquired about the big books, sometimes out of curiosity and

sometimes to tease me. I hated being different. Classmates noticed that I frequently washed my hands and used hand sanitizer. To annoy me, some would touch my belongings which made them contaminated in my mind. One classmate wore "cow poop boots" to school and would antagonize me. I believed the car was dirty and would insist that my mom clean it. I began to use Lysol spray to counter my fear of contamination, and would spray my backpack and every sheet of paper in it before going straight to the shower. I averaged three showers per day.

My OCD became more severe in college. Every day, I found myself stuck in my dorm room compulsively cleaning until it felt "just right." I missed quite a bit of class, spending my time cleaning. I continuously washed my hands, decontaminated my dorm room, my clothes, and took extra-long showers. Severe OCD was controlling my life to the point where I left college and returned home.

I lived in a complete state of fear. I spent my days isolated in my room, spraying and cleaning nonstop, and showering at least eight times per day. I washed my hands until they bled. I refused to let anybody in my room, and I could not leave it until I was "clean enough." I skipped meals and missed taking important medication because of contamination fears. I avoided the kitchen if meat, eggs, or chicken were being prepared. I would watch like a hawk to ensure no cross-contamination occurred during dinner preparation and that everything got cleaned according to OCD's standard.

After being imprisoned by fear, I made the decision to seek treatment. I deeply desired to take my life back, and it was an uphill battle. I applied to numerous treatment facilities, but I was turned away time and time again. This left me feeling



## FROM THE FRONT LINES

hopeless and frustrated, wondering if I was ever going to get help. Imagine — a young lady is desperate to take control back from OCD, poor eyesight is limiting her chance to get the help she deserves, has had many injuries due to avoidance of using a cane, and has had severe infections that led to hospitalization — what a liability ...

Eventually, someone was willing to take a chance on me. I was elated when Neurobehavioral Institute (NBI) in Florida agreed to meet with me. After an evaluation period and working through complicated issues, the NBI staff chose to work with me. They supported me in managing my medical issues and gave me the chance to live again. My journey at NBI began in March 2019. The first step that I had to take was to demonstrate that I could manage my medical issues independently. I was required to demonstrate proficient use of my white cane for the blind; If I could do this, I could stay. So, I did. Using my cane meant accepting that I had a disability. I was terrified of this, but I did it — I accepted my blindness and became proficient with my cane. I developed sufficient independence to begin intense therapy for my severe OCD. I worked tirelessly for six months conquering many fears along the way. The battle was long and hard-fought, yet beyond worth it.

At the start of treatment, powerful OCD prevented me from using my cane, keeping me confined to a life of dependency on others, to a life without freedom, to a dark and lonely world. The most difficult challenge I faced was accepting my disability. It was not easy, but I eventually began to use my white cane, a.k.a. "sh\*\* stick." As treatment progressed, my acceptance grew, and I became best friends with "sh\*\* stick" as it soon became my newfound independence. I took the first step towards true freedom!

It was incredible to see the real Kathryn come to life as I progressed in treatment. At first, I walked through the doors of NBI like a ghost — shy and dependent, requiring assistance to get anywhere. I had no confidence, and my personality had been completely taken over by constant fear. As I shed the mask of fear over time, that OCD bubble began to burst. My fun, sassy, and confident self started to shine. I continued to gain independence and learned that the control I thought I had was not true control: it was solely OCD controlling me. I found that when I used my cane, I was able to be an independent young woman in control of her life.

Later, I had the privilege of visiting NBI to share my inspiring story with others fighting OCD. It was then that I learned that some of the clinicians worried if I would be okay in the program. I am deeply grateful to all these clinicians who took a chance on me. Without treatment, I would have remained stuck in OCD's prison.

Clinicians at NBI took an enormous leap of faith when they decided to partner with me on my healing journey. Just look at me now! I am honored to pay it forward and to share my story, hopefully inspiring others on their own journeys. Since learning to manage OCD through an intense treatment program, I am living a more fulfilling life. I babysit, box, and ride horses. I'm involved with IOCDF's Chronic Illness/Disability and OCD Special Interest Group. I love attending church and being in a small group of wonderful women. I am also excited to have been asked to share my BBS story with others. Recently, I started taking a medication that will hopefully preserve my remaining photoreceptor cells, keeping them healthy in case a treatment becomes available to restore some of my eyesight. Whether this dream comes true or not, I am still able to live life OC-Free because I am in control now, not OCD! 🕒



*Born a fighter, Kathryn (Kat) Blalock, 28, is a tenacious young woman from Oklahoma. She is a diehard Oklahoma State Cowboys fan and enjoys boxing and riding horses. Kat has suffered from severe OCD her entire life and has a rare genetic disorder which makes her mostly blind.*

*Currently, Kat is an ambassador for a pharmaceutical company where she shares her experience with her disorder. Kathryn has a huge heart for helping others. You can find more about her inspiring story at [kathrynblalock.com](http://kathrynblalock.com).*

*Learn more about the Chronic Illness/Disability and OCD Special Interest Group (SIG), and all the other SIGs at [iocdf.org/sigs](http://iocdf.org/sigs)*

## THE THERAPY COMMUNITY

### “And We’re Live!” — Talking about OCD and Treatment on the Radio



*Marni L. Jacob, PhD, ABPP, was recently a featured guest on Sirius XM’s Doctor Radio show About Our Kids. In this article, IOCDF Communications Manager Amanda Ota interviewed Dr. Jacob to gain an inside look at*

*what a radio appearance is like and what talking about OCD and treatment is like on-air!*

**Amanda Ota (AO): How did the interview come together?**

Marni Jacobs, PhD (MJ): The interview came together rather quickly. A producer at SiriusXM reached out to the IOCDF and requested an expert in OCD and related disorders to participate in a live radio interview the next morning on SiriusXM’s Doctor Radio About Our Kids radio show. I agreed to participate, and the radio producer sent me the details.

**AO: What was the content of the interview?**

MJ: I was told of the topic, which was to be a general discussion about how parents can identify a child who has OCD and/or anxiety, and diagnosis and treatment options. Most of the interview consisted of questions asked by the radio show hosts, who were a psychologist and psychiatrist from NYU Langone Health. Initial questions focused on describing obsessions and compulsions, including what warrants diagnosis of symptoms as a disorder, and

typical age of onset. Interviewers asked how to recognize when behaviors may be based in OCD versus being developmentally appropriate behaviors of early childhood. We also spent time discussing cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) with exposure and response prevention (ERP) for OCD, including the importance of providing psychoeducation and a solid rationale for treatment. Other questions focused on managing co-occurring disruptive behavior, addressing myths about treatment, changes to how OCD is categorized in the DSM-5, and the inhibitory learning approach. The show ended with some brief Q&A from audience members who called in.

**AO: What did you share?**

MJ: Though the discussion was guided based on the interviewer’s questions, there were a few key points that I strived to mention. I referenced the IOCDF, as I think it is essential for more people to know where they can find support and resources. I specified CBT with ERP as an effective, first-line treatment for OCD with robust empirical support, and I emphasized that it is important for patients to work with an experienced, specialized treatment provider. I also sought to address some of the myths and misperceptions that exist about the use of exposures in treatment, by conveying that treatment should be collaborative, manageable, and empowering. Since some people have beliefs that exposure therapy can be cruel and/or unnecessarily distressing, I think it is essential for us to address such concerns, particularly given the absence of empirical data indicating that exposure is harmful and/or intolerable (see Spencer et al., 2023 for a review). This is especially important, since negative beliefs about therapy

may prevent people from seeking treatment. Although the intensity of exposures can certainly vary, I discussed that ethical clinical practice involves building a strong therapeutic alliance and considering a patient’s goals and values in the design of exposures. I reviewed examples to help get youth on board, such as by incorporating games and rewards into treatment. Lastly, I tried to convey a message of hope to listeners by emphasizing that we have highly effective treatment available to help individuals with OCD gain skills to manage their symptoms and improve their quality of life and functioning.

**AO: Is there anything you didn’t have a chance to share in the interview that you’d like to share now?**

MJ: As the interview was fairly short, it generally consisted of brief bites of limited information, which can be difficult to provide, given such a complex disorder. However, I would have liked to share more about the lesser known symptoms and presentations of OCD. Many of the examples discussed during the interview mentioned stereotypical presentations of OCD symptoms, often focused on rituals related to organizing, checking, and handwashing. I think it is important for people to know about other common OCD symptoms, such as intrusive or taboo thoughts, morality and/or scrupulosity, “just right” symptoms, and the many other ways that OCD can manifest. This, in turn, will facilitate more accurate diagnosis and treatment.

Additionally, it would have been helpful to talk more about how parents and caregivers often inadvertently reinforce OCD due to a desire to decrease their child’s distress. Further, it would be useful to elaborate on how it is

beneficial for parents and caregivers to be actively involved in treatment, such as by learning skills to better support their child with OCD.

**AO: What was the experience like being on the radio?**

MJ: The experience was enjoyable, as it was a collegial discussion with peers. As the interview felt short and quick, it can sometimes be challenging to answer multifaceted questions succinctly, given the limited time frame of an on-air interview. However, I hope it was helpful in getting some good information to those who need it!

**AO: Do you have any advice for other therapists who might be interested in being featured on the radio in the future?**

MJ: My advice would be to go for it, as radio interviews are a great way to disseminate information and resources to a large audience. If you have advance notice before the interview, it could be helpful to list any important points that you want to highlight during the interview. If possible, you could also request a list of pre-determined questions, as that can help you better prepare. Be thoughtful about what you say, as listeners will trust that you are sharing accurate information. I’d also suggest trying to use examples and language that are easily understood by a layperson audience, versus overly clinical or scientific terms. 🗣️

**REFERENCES**

Spencer, S.D., Stiede, J.T., Wiese, A.D., Guzick, A.G., Cervin, M., McKay, D., & Storch, E.A. (2023). Things that make you go Hmm: Myths and misconceptions within cognitive-behavioral treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorder. *Journal of Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders*, 37. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jocrd.2023.100805>

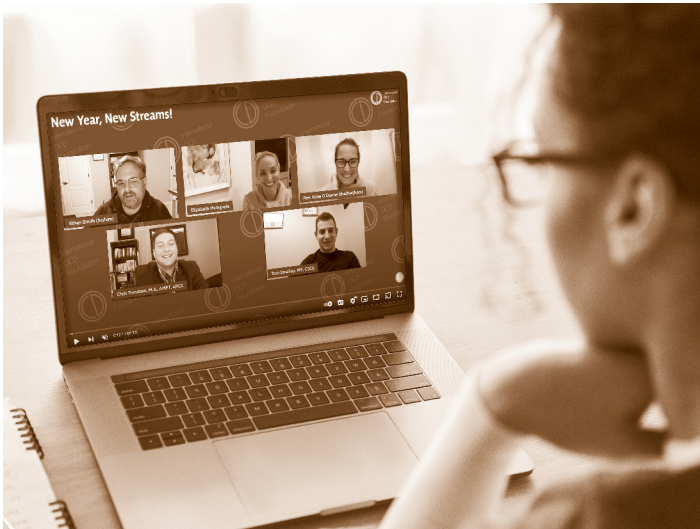
**IOCDF — LIVESTREAMS!**

Tune in for twice-weekly livestreams to interact with OCD experts and people just like you who live with OCD and related disorders!

- **Tuesdays @ 7pm ET**
- **Wednesdays @ 12pm ET**

Ask your questions, connect with others in the community, and join the conversation to fight stigma surrounding mental health.

**All streams are completely free. Tune in via IOCDF’s YouTube, Facebook, Twitch, or LinkedIn pages — or at [iocdf.org/live](https://iocdf.org/live)**



## THERAPY COMMUNITY

*Institutional Members of the International OCD Foundation are programs or clinics that specialize in the treatment of OCD and related disorders. For a full list of the IOCDF's Institutional Members, please visit [iocdf.org/clinics](http://iocdf.org/clinics).*

### ANXIETY EXPERTS

1482 East Valley Rd, Suite 17  
Montecito, CA 93108  
[intake@andreakulberg.com](mailto:intake@andreakulberg.com)  
[andreakulberg.com](http://andreakulberg.com)

1247 7th St., Ste 200  
Santa Monica, CA 90401

Anxiety Experts is thrilled to announce the opening of our fourth treatment location in Santa Monica, California. Our live and virtual IOP and OP programs are covered by insurance and we pride ourselves on offering ERP and ACT modalities for OCD, other anxiety-based disorders, and eating concerns. We are also excited to announce that over the summer, Anxiety Experts received accreditation from The Joint Commission. We are accepting new patients now. Please call for a free assessment at (805) 705-0614 or visit [andreakulberg.com](http://andreakulberg.com) today to inquire about our evidence-based treatment programs.

### ANXIETY SPECIALISTS OF ATLANTA

1360 Center Drive, Suite 100 & 200  
Dunwoody, GA 30338  
(678) 825-2320  
[admin@anxietyatl.com](mailto:admin@anxietyatl.com)  
[anxietyspecialistsofatlanta.com](http://anxietyspecialistsofatlanta.com)

Founded in 2014 by Dr. Josh Spitalnick, Licensed Psychologist, Board Certified in Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology, and training faculty member for the IOCDF, Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta is a center of excellence focused on serving children, adolescents, adults, families, and couples who battle anxiety and OCD. Headquartered in beautiful Dunwoody, Georgia, our multidisciplinary team of over 20 specialists provides in-person services to the Metro Atlanta community along with telehealth services to more than 35 states.

Our brand of clinical care emphasizes the science of anxiety assessment and treatment, along with compassionate, interactive, and highly engaging treatment approaches, including exposure and response prevention (ERP) for OCD and anxiety disorders. We offer intensive treatment programs for patients who need a higher level of intervention, along with a variety of free and low-cost group therapy and support group options, including groups for parents, caregivers, and loved ones supporting those with OCD, in addition to groups for those with lived experience.

We remain dedicated to increasing the availability, accessibility, and affordability of evidence-based treatment and educational resources for all.

Check out [youtube.com/@anxietyatl](https://www.youtube.com/@anxietyatl) for recently released videos on the treatment of avoidant restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID) and "25 Tips for raising more resilient children"

who battle anxiety and OCD.

### ANXIETY TREATMENT CENTER OF AUSTIN

8701 Shoal Creek Blvd., Suite 404  
Austin, TX 78757  
(512) 879-1836  
[diana@anxietyaustin.com](mailto:diana@anxietyaustin.com)  
[anxietyaustin.com](http://anxietyaustin.com)

Anxiety Treatment Center of Austin is thrilled to announce the start of our newest team member, Dr. Emily Kindschi, PsyD (she/her)! Emily brings with her a passion for treating individuals with OCD and related disorders as well as a commitment to the process and practice of evidence-based practices such as CBT, ERP, and ACT. Emily additionally brings couples therapy services to Anxiety Treatment Center of Austin. She is currently accepting in-person and virtual appointments.

As we welcome Emily to our practice, we say goodbye to our beloved team members, Dr. Whitney Wheeler, Dr. Nick Taylor, and Dr. Janna Greeson. We wish them well on their new life adventures!

### THE ANXIETY TREATMENT CENTER OF GREATER CHICAGO

707 Lake Cook Road, Suite 310  
Deerfield, IL 60015  
(847) 559-0001  
[KLCassiday@anxietytreatmentcenter.com](mailto:KLCassiday@anxietytreatmentcenter.com)  
[anxietytreatmentcenter.com](http://anxietytreatmentcenter.com)

We are pleased to welcome our three new interns, Alex Gelber, TK Khalid, and Kelly Magallon. They are helping us expand our intensive treatment program for OCD for kids, teens, and adults.

### ARCHWAYS CENTRE FOR CBT

460 Springbank Drive, Suite 205  
London, ON, Canada N6J 0A8  
(519) 472-6612  
[info@archways.ca](mailto:info@archways.ca)  
[archways.ca](http://archways.ca)

Greetings from Canada! We are based in London (Ontario), conveniently located two hours from Toronto, Buffalo, NY, and Detroit, MI. We offer in-person sessions at our location in London, and by secure video to any residents of Ontario.

Archways is a private psychology clinic focused on delivering evidence-based treatment to help individuals with OCD get well and stay well. Our OCD & BFRB Clinic is one of only three sites in Canada recognized by the IOCDF as delivering specialized assessment and treatment for OCD and related disorders.

In addition to our four psychologists and two therapists, we have a psychiatrist who offers psychiatry consultations to assist with starting, ending, or changing medications. We are a close-knit group of clinicians who enjoy consulting with one another to help optimize treatment, and sharing new resources we

# THE THERAPY COMMUNITY

find at conferences. Our goal is to provide timely and effective treatment in a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

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## BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE OCD PROGRAM

1977 Butler Blvd., Suite 400  
Houston, TX 77030  
(713) 798-3080  
[ocdprogram@bcm.edu](mailto:ocdprogram@bcm.edu)  
[bcm.edu](http://bcm.edu)

We are excited to announce that we have begun enrollment for a project examining if children with OCD on an antidepressant can successfully discontinue their medication after achieving wellness through CBT (Promoting OCD Wellness and Resilience, POWER). For more information about POWER contact [powerocdstudy@bcm.edu](mailto:powerocdstudy@bcm.edu) or (713) 798-6077. Information about other BCM studies can be found here: [bcm.edu/research/facultylabs/eric-storch-lab/current-studies/asd-and-anxiety](http://bcm.edu/research/facultylabs/eric-storch-lab/current-studies/asd-and-anxiety).

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## BETTER LIVING CENTER FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

1333 W. McDermott Ste 150  
Allen, TX 75013  
(972) 332-8733  
[admissions@betterlivingbh.org](mailto:admissions@betterlivingbh.org)  
[betterlivingbh.org](http://betterlivingbh.org)

Better Living Center for Behavioral Health offers individual, intensive outpatient, and day treatment options. We are happy to announce we have brought on Dr. Dean McKay, ABPP, as our Chief Clinical Science Officer and Gabriel Martinez as our Chief Operations Officer. We also have several new clinicians and a variety of new payment methods opening up to help meet your client’s needs. We offer out of network use of benefits and will soon be in-network with a number of insurances.

We are also adding programming to help those with difficulty with emotional regulation that tend to struggle moving directly into ERP work. Please check out our current programming at [betterlivingbh.org](http://betterlivingbh.org) or call (972) 332-8733.

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## BULL CITY ANXIETY & OCD TREATMENT CENTER

918 Broad Street  
Durham, NC 27705  
(919) 808-2318  
[info@bullcityanxiety.com](mailto:info@bullcityanxiety.com)  
[bullcityanxiety.com](http://bullcityanxiety.com)

We’re thrilled to welcome Allison Bell, LCSWA, to our practice! Allison brings years of experience treating OCD and anxiety, as well as comorbid eating disorders. Bull City Anxiety & OCD Treatment Center is working hard to keep up with the needs of the OCD community in North Carolina and we’re excited to have Allison on board to help out. We’re still offering virtual services, but we have our sight set on a brick-and-mortar space and hope to begin expanding our in-person offerings as soon as possible.

We’re currently gearing up for the One Million Steps for OCD Walk this fall — if you’re local to North Carolina, come say hello to our team at the Durham walk on October 7th, 2023.

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## THE CENTER FOR EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA

1910 Route 70 E, Suite 7 601 Ewing St, Ste C-2  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003 Princeton, NJ 08540  
(856) 220-9672  
[mail@thecenterforemotionalhealth.com](mailto:mail@thecenterforemotionalhealth.com)  
[thecenterforemotionalhealth.com](http://thecenterforemotionalhealth.com)

The Center for Emotional Health of Greater Philadelphia (CEH) welcomes new postdoctoral fellows to our team this fall! Megan DeRiso, PsyD, completed her doctorate in clinical psychology at Nova Southeastern University and her internship at University of Texas Health Science Center. Megan Giles, PsyD, completed her doctorate in clinical psychology at Rutgers University GSAPP and her internship at Veterans Affairs New Jersey Health Care. Elizabeth “Tish” Hicks, PhD, completed her doctorate in clinical psychology at Utah State University and her internship at Veterans Affairs Pittsburgh Healthcare System. Bill Pilney, PhD, completed his doctorate in school psychology at Temple University and his clinical internship at Compass Health Network. Each of these excellent clinicians bring a wealth of training experience and enthusiasm to their work and we are excited to welcome them to the CEH family.

CEH is excited to share the release of “The BFRB Recovery Workbook,” a comprehensive integrative behavioral self-directed guide for individuals with body-focused repetitive behaviors, by Marla Deibler, PsyD, ABPP, and Renae Reinardy, PsyD. The only resource of its kind, we hope it provides much-needed relief to those living with BFRBs and guidance to clinicians seeking to build their skill set in working with these disorders.

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## THE CENTER FOR OCD AND ANXIETY AT SHEPPARD PRATT

6501 N Charles St.  
Gibson Building, Suite 305  
Baltimore, MD 21204  
(410) 927-5462  
[jenna.meyers@sheppardpratt.org](mailto:jenna.meyers@sheppardpratt.org)  
[ocdbaltimore.com](http://ocdbaltimore.com)

Sheppard Pratt’s Center for OCD and Anxiety is here to serve as a resource for all clinicians. Our clinicians led several presentations and support groups at the Annual OCD Conference in July. Coming up, catch Jon Hershfield’s upcoming talk at the Southern Psychiatric Association conference in Huntsville, AL, on understanding obsessive-compulsive symptoms across diagnoses. Won’t be in Huntsville? Sheppard Pratt offers FREE VIRTUAL OCD CE lectures, with our upcoming series this fall — tune in live or on demand at [cme.sheppardpratt.org](http://cme.sheppardpratt.org). And, Jon will be participating in an IOCDF livestream panel on Rebranding ERP on Sept. 27 at 12 ET!

## THERAPY COMMUNITY

Looking for intensive care for anxiety or OCD? We're accepting referrals to The LifeLaunch, a residential program for teens 12–17, as well as The Retreat, a residential program for adults. Both programs feature individualized OCD and anxiety treatment from our team of specialists. New at The Retreat — senior clinician Brenda Kijesky, LCMFT, is now an intensively trained RO DBT clinician.

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### **THE CENTER FOR OCD & ANXIETY RELATED DISORDERS (COARD) AT SAINT LOUIS BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE INSTITUTE**

**1129 Macklind Avenue**

**St. Louis, MO**

**(314) 289-9411**

[slbmicoardicp@uhsinc.com](mailto:slbmicoardicp@uhsinc.com)

[slbmi.com](http://slbmi.com)

The Center for OCD & Anxiety Related Disorders (COARD) program at Saint Louis Behavioral Medicine Institute (SLBMI) is an internationally recognized, multidisciplinary program that has treated obsessive-compulsive and anxiety conditions for over 30 years. COARD offers outpatient, intensive outpatient, and partial hospitalization levels of care, conducted either in-person or over telehealth (within any PSYPACT state), across all age ranges. COARD's IOP and PHP programs are highly unique in that they offer individually tailored care provided in a one-to-one session format. We welcome any inquiries about our programming (from clients or clinicians)! Please email [slbmicoardicp@uhsinc.com](mailto:slbmicoardicp@uhsinc.com).

We are delighted to share that Sam Marre, our IOP Program Manager/Clinician, will be continuing with us after completing her post-graduate specialty training! We are also looking forward to welcoming three new post-graduate fellows (Seda Follis, Margaret Quiring, and Mari Chimitris), an advanced practicum student (Jacob Arett), and three practicum students (Beatris Garcia, Paige Looney, and Christal Borden) in September! Welcome!

We are hiring! COARD is excited to expand our programming to better support the high demand for anxiety specialty services. We welcome new clinicians looking to provide outpatient anxiety specialty care or oversee the care of patients in our intensive/partial hospitalization program. Applicants can apply at [slbmi.com](http://slbmi.com).

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### **CHILD MIND INSTITUTE**

**101 E 56th St**

**New York, NY 10022**

**(212) 308-3118**

[info@childmind.org](mailto:info@childmind.org)

[childmind.org](http://childmind.org)

The Child Mind Institute Intensive OCD Program offers children and their families an immersive, holistic experience that can make an extraordinary difference in a short period of time. While typical or traditional treatment demonstrates that patients make significant progress during weekly sessions spread out over three

to four months, the intensive treatment program condenses those sessions into one to four weeks, making evidence-based treatment of OCD available three hours a day, five days a week. The program is open to children up to college/young adults. Families from outside the New York City area are welcome to reach out for treatment. We include parents and family members in every stage of a child's treatment. OCD intensive services are available in English and Spanish. The Child Mind Institute offers a financial aid program to help families with the cost of services. We are excited to welcome Sydney Kirsch, LMSW, who provides individual exposure therapy to children and adolescents in the Intensive OCD Program.

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### **CINCINNATI ANXIETY CENTER**

**11085 Montgomery Rd**

**Cincinnati, OH 45249**

**(513) 547-2861**

[info@theanxietycenter.com](mailto:info@theanxietycenter.com)

[cincinnati.anxietycenter.com](http://cincinnati.anxietycenter.com)

#### **TREATMENT REIMAGINED**

Our approach is to use the very best treatments and technologies in behavioral health and to apply them skillfully and compassionately. We adhere exclusively to treatments that have been established through rigorous scientific research because we want you to have the confidence that you are receiving a treatment that has been proven to be effective. We do not believe in a "one size fits all" model and will work flexibly in designing a program with you in mind.

Our center provides the full continuum of integrated behavioral health services, from the cutting-edge neuromodulation therapies like BrainsWay Deep TMS to coordinated psychiatric services for medication management, including genomic testing. When you enter our offices, you will find a center committed to the quality of patient care and a space designed to provide comfort, privacy, and convenience.

All of our psychotherapists utilize a multi-modal approach to therapy, and all have specialized training in process-based cognitive behavioral (CBT) orientation, meaning that when you receive services through our center you will be receiving short-term, individualized, practical, and action-oriented therapy in order to help you achieve the best possible outcome.

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### **COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CLINIC FOR ANXIETY & RELATED DISORDERS (CUCARD)**

**155 White Plains Road, Ste 200**

**Tarrytown, NY 10591**

**(212) 304-5852**

[columbiadoctors.org/childrens-health/anxietydayprogram](http://columbiadoctors.org/childrens-health/anxietydayprogram)

[anxietytreatmentnyc.org](http://anxietytreatmentnyc.org)

[acp2137@cumc.columbia.edu](mailto:acp2137@cumc.columbia.edu)

**3 Columbus Circle, Ste 1425**

**New York, NY 10019**

As we prepare for the new school year, CUCARD Westchester will continue to provide daily programming through our Anxiety

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Day Program (ADP). The ADP is specifically tailored to provide intensive treatment for high school students whose OCD and anxiety symptoms lead to school avoidance or difficulty managing daily expectations. This fall, CUCARD will also offer groups for young adults and their parents at our Westchester and midtown Manhattan offices. These groups can help support individuals and families managing OCD through the stages of late adolescence and young adulthood.

We are excited to welcome our incoming postdoctoral fellow, Dr. Juliet Schwarz. Dr. Schwarz will provide care through CUCARD Westchester’s outpatient clinic and Anxiety Day Program. Finally, we send best wishes to Dr. Blake Zakarin, who will be ending her tenure at CUCARD this September. Dr. Zakarin served as CUCARD’s clinical director since 2018 and we are very grateful for her leadership and dedication to CUCARD’s patients and staff!

**GENESEE VALLEY PSYCHOLOGY, PLLC**

**200 White Spruce Blvd, Ste 220  
Rochester, NY 14623  
(585) 201-8017  
drwadsworth@gviproc.org  
gviproc.org**

Genesee Valley Psychology (GVP) continues to expand services across New York State in person and via telehealth. We are actively accepting applicants for OCD/anxiety therapists at our Rochester and Buffalo locations! Therapists have the option of seeing kids, teens, and/or adults with OCD and anxiety and have the opportunity to serve as primary therapists in our intensive OCD program.

**INSTRIDE HEALTH**

**396 Washington St., #266  
Wellesley, MA 02481  
(855) 438-8331  
info@instride.health  
instride.health**

InStride Health, in collaboration with McLean Hospital (a Harvard Medical School affiliate), specializes in providing evidence-based behavioral health treatment for youth ages seven to 22 experiencing OCD and/or anxiety, particularly those with moderate to severe conditions. We offer treatment in NJ, MA, CT, RI, and NH, and will be offering services in NY beginning later in the fall. Patients can typically start treatment with InStride within about three days of applying.

We are excited to share that we are insurance-based and our carriers have expanded. We accept Anthem BCBS, Horizon BCBS, UnitedHealthcare, Optum, ConnectiCare, Harvard Pilgrim, Oscar, Oxford, BCBS of MA, and Mass General Brigham Health Plan — making our specialized care even more accessible to those in need.

**KANSAS CITY CENTER FOR ANXIETY TREATMENT**

**10555 Marty St., Suite 100  
Overland Park, KS 66212-2555  
(913) 649-8820  
info@kcanxiety.com  
kcanxiety.com**

KCCAT would like to congratulate Anna Hunter, MA, on completing her fellowship with KCCAT as of October and are happy to announce she will be staying on with us as a Staff Therapist! Drs. Raquel Craney and Dakota McNamara recently completed the first year of their fellowships and are continuing onto Year 2 for advanced training, and we would like to congratulate them on obtaining their independent licensure! We’re excited to have all of these talented early career professionals on our team to strengthen our mission of training and excellent patient care. Speaking of patient care, the second round of our Anxiety Treatment Group for Adults just got underway, which is a great opportunity for adults with a variety of presenting concerns, including OCD, to get access to evidence-based group services. We look forward to offering this group on an ongoing basis! KCCAT is also excited to get involved with OCD Awareness Week through OCD Kansas’ conference on 10/7 and the OCD Walk on 10/14. We look forward to connecting with our local OCD community through these events!

**NEUROBEHAVIORAL INSTITUTE (NBI) & NBI RANCH**

**2233 N. Commerce Parkway #      2695 S. Le Jeune Rd. #201 3  
Weston, FL 33326                      Coral Gables, FL 33134  
(954) 217-1757  
info@nbweston.com  
nbweston.com**

We had an amazing experience at the 28th Annual OCD Conference, as presenters and sponsors. We loved seeing our colleagues, and catching up on the latest in treatment and research. Since our last update, we are excited to share that David Tolin, PhD, has increased his engagement with NBI to support our team’s training and to ensure the highest quality of care. Speaking of training, Michael Twohig, PhD, came to NBI and conducted a fantastic in-person, two-day ACT workshop for our staff. We also had a highly informative talk on understanding and treating body-focused repetitive behaviors (BFRBs) by Fred Penzel, PhD.

We are continuing our series of podcasts on the OCD Stories with Stuart Ralph — recent topics included “Aha Moments” (with Ethan Smith), “Cracking the Nut” on working with ‘difficult-to-treat’ cases, and “How the Sausage is Made,” about what happens behind the scenes at an OCD treatment program. On the home front, we have expanded on-call coverage by our clinical team to further enhance our ability to provide 24/7 support for individuals in our programs. We will also soon be welcoming three new postdoctoral residents. Lastly, we’re renovating our main offices. Can’t wait to enjoy our improved space!

## THE THERAPY COMMUNITY

### NEW ENGLAND OCD INSTITUTE

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Tolland, CT 06084  
(860) 830-7838  
[admin@behavioralwellnessclinic.com](mailto:admin@behavioralwellnessclinic.com)  
[ocdtypes.com](http://ocdtypes.com)

554 King Edward Ave, Suite 0034  
Ottawa, ON, Canada K1N 6N5  
(343) 430-3291  
[bewellpsych.ca](mailto:bewellpsych.ca)

This summer, the New England OCD Institute was proudly represented by our Clinical Director, Dr. Monnica Williams, PhD, ABPP, at the 28th Annual OCD Conference in San Francisco where she presented a Plenary Address on OCD and racism. Dr. Williams's presentation exemplified the barriers racism causes when treating OCD and highlighted the significance of developing cultural awareness. We are grateful for Dr. Williams to be bringing light to this important topic. All of our trainings and programs incorporate this mission as we continue to strive to break those racist barriers. Check out our website for more information about training opportunities at [ocdtypes.com](http://ocdtypes.com).

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### NOCD

225 N Michigan Ave., Suite 1430  
Chicago, IL 60601  
(312) 766-6780  
[info@nocdhelp.com](mailto:info@nocdhelp.com)  
[treatmyocd.com](http://treatmyocd.com)

At NOCD, we strive to make evidence-based OCD care more affordable, convenient, and personalized.

NOCD is a specialty provider of treatment for OCD and OCD spectrum conditions, providing live face-to-face video therapy sessions with licensed therapists and between-session support. NOCD's services are 100% virtual, making treatment more accessible than ever, but we recognize that collaboration is key to providing exceptional care. To meet the needs of our members, we sometimes need to refer out to other providers. We're looking for partners who offer medication management, Medicaid, or in-person care.

NOCD Therapy is in network with most major insurance providers, including UnitedHealthcare, Aetna, Cigna, Humana, Blue Cross Blue Shield plans, and more. Over 135 million Americans can access NOCD through their commercial insurance benefits.

NOCD Therapists work with members in all 50 states and in many countries internationally, and many members can see one of our OCD-trained therapists within seven days on average.

Those over the age of five can access care that addresses their needs. Our licensed therapists also receive training in evidence-based treatments for conditions that commonly affect the OCD community, like trichotillomania (also known as hair pulling disorder), hoarding disorder, PTSD, tic disorder, and excoriation disorder.

To learn more about collaborating together, visit [treatmyocd.com/collaborate-with-therapists](http://treatmyocd.com/collaborate-with-therapists).

### NORTHWELL HEALTH OCD CENTER

Zucker Hillside Hospital  
Glen Oaks, NY 11004  
(718) 470-8052  
[ocdcenter@northwell.edu](mailto:ocdcenter@northwell.edu)  
[northwell.edu/ocdcenter](http://northwell.edu/ocdcenter)

The Northwell Health OCD Center offers evidence-based, comprehensive outpatient treatment for OCD and OCPD. It is one of the only specialized OCD/OCPD facilities in the New York metropolitan area to accept most health insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid. Treatment options include individual and group CBT and medication management. The OCD Center offers in-person and virtual individual sessions as well as twelve virtual therapy groups (e.g., ERP practice and skills-building, OCPD treatment, family OCD education/support without accommodation, DBT skills, and weekly/monthly improvement maintenance). Please email us at [ocdcenter@northwell.edu](mailto:ocdcenter@northwell.edu) to inquire about treatment.

Our director Dr. Pinto was recently interviewed about OCPD for the OCD Stories podcast and over the summer he also served as a faculty member for the IOCDF's Behavioral Therapy Training Institute (BTTI). In July, we welcomed our new class of psychology and psychiatry trainees. This fall, we welcomed our new post-doctoral fellow Dr. Keryn Kleiman and psychiatric nurse practitioner Lauren Devins, while our outgoing post-doctoral fellow, Dr. Taylor Zar, stepped into a staff psychologist position. We are grateful that our team is expanding and that as a result, we are able to increase treatment access for OCD and OCPD sufferers across New York state.

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### OCD AND ANXIETY PROGRAM OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

3205 Ocean Park Blvd, Suite 250  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
(310) 488-5850  
[info@socalocd.org](mailto:info@socalocd.org)  
[socalocdprogram.org](http://socalocdprogram.org)

We are very excited to announce that we will be offering the effective and concentrated Bergen 4 Day Treatment (B4DT) beginning in January 2024. This exciting project, led by the programs directors Thröstur Björgvinsson, PhD, ABPP, and Naomi Zwecker, PhD, is in collaboration with Bjarne Hansen, PhD, one of the creators of the B4DT and director of Bergen Center for Brain Plasticity, and its co-director Kristen Hansen, PhD.

Furthermore, with generous support from the Bergen-based Kavli Fund, OCD therapists from all over the world will receive training to become certified as B4DT therapists. The Los Angeles program will function as the national and international B4DT training center. Teams, based in these cities, have signed up for training in Los Angeles: Quito, Ecuador; Nairobi, Kenya; and Melbourne, Australia. This is in addition to existing B4DT teams in Singapore, Sweden, Germany, Finland, and Iceland.



# THErapy COMMUNITY

Additionally, beginning in the spring of 2024, workshops about B4DT and other innovative approaches will be offered through the LA program to interested therapists (nationally and globally) to attend.

Please visit [socalocdprogram.org](http://socalocdprogram.org) or call (310) 488-5850 for more information about how to apply to receive the B4DT in Los Angeles and what else is offered.

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## OCD INSTITUTE MCLEAN HOSPITAL

**115 Mill St.  
Belmont, MA 02478-1064  
(617) 855-2776  
[ocdiadmissions@mgb.org](mailto:ocdiadmissions@mgb.org)  
[mcleanhospital.org/ocd](http://mcleanhospital.org/ocd)**

The OCDI is excited to welcome two new staff members to round out our Behavior Therapy team!

Brittany Burns, PhD, received her doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Boston University, where she researched and practiced transdiagnostic treatment for anxiety and related disorders. Dr. Burns has trained in populations struggling with anxiety, mood, trauma, and personality disorders, and she is experienced in DBT, ACT, CBT, ERP, and trauma-focused treatments. She completed her postdoctoral fellowship at OCD Institute Texas. Dr. Burns is interested in enhancing intensive, diagnosis-specific treatments to address interacting, comorbid psychological diagnoses.

Valeria Tretyak joins the OCDI as a clinical postdoctoral fellow following completion of a year-long predoctoral clinical internship at McLean’s Adult Behavioral Health Partial Program. Valeria graduated with her doctoral degree in clinical psychology from the University of Texas at Austin, where her research centered on investigating the neural correlates of alcohol misuse as a coping strategy in young adults with bipolar disorder and history of early life stress and trauma. Clinically, Valeria is passionate about treatment of OCD and anxiety related disorders, utilizing CBT- and ACT-based techniques with a particular emphasis on exposure therapy.

We welcome Brittany and Valeria to the OCDI!

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## OCD INSTITUTE | TEXAS

**708 E 19th St  
Houston, TX 77008  
(713) 994-4550  
[info@houstonocd.org](mailto:info@houstonocd.org)  
[ocditexas.com](http://ocditexas.com)**

We have officially changed our name to the OCD Institute of Texas but are the same program (previously Houston OCD Program)! We are excited to announce that we are expanding our PHP program this fall to increase our capacity. In addition, we are now offering psychological assessment services that can be integrated into our PHP and residential program for patients.

As always, our specialized OCD PHP and residential program continues to operate and serve those living with severe OCD, anxiety, and related disorders. We have active openings in our intensive programming and are honored to continue to serve those who most need our services. For more information please feel free to call us directly at (832) 900-8687 or visit our website to learn more at [ocditexas.com](http://ocditexas.com).

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## THE OCD TREATMENT CENTER

**1451 Quail Street, Suite 112  
Newport Beach, CA 92660  
(714) 656-2343  
[info@theocdtreatmentcenter.com](mailto:info@theocdtreatmentcenter.com)  
[theocdtreatmentcenter.com](http://theocdtreatmentcenter.com)**

The OCD Treatment Center is expanding and relocating from Fountain Valley to Newport Beach (located close to John Wayne Airport — SNA). With continued success of our intensive treatment program, we will now be able to support more clients from Southern California, nationally, and even internationally, with getting access to our program. Our new and improved treatment center will provide the ability to support multiple intensive treatment program clients and their families with one-on-one treatment and care. Additionally, our new facility will provide the ability to support more local clients with additional weekly services. We are looking forward to hiring more team members and providing additional care to the OCD community. For more information, please visit our website at [theocdtreatmentcenter.com](http://theocdtreatmentcenter.com) or read some of our Google reviews. We look forward to speaking with you soon.

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## PEDIATRIC ANXIETY RESEARCH CENTER

**1011 Veterans Memorial Pkwy  
East Providence, RI 02915  
(401) 432-1588  
[jherren@lifespan.org](mailto:jherren@lifespan.org)  
[parcanxiety.org](http://parcanxiety.org)**

The Pediatric Anxiety Research Center (PARC) at Bradley Hospital is an integrated research and clinical center providing exposure-based treatment through a range of services including office-based, home-based, and partial hospital programs for youth with OCD and anxiety.

We are excited to announce several new team members at PARC! Dr. Sarah McHugh and Dr. Pamela Scalise joined PARC’s partial programs as staff psychologists this summer. We also welcomed Dr. Rachel Olfson, a child and adolescent psychiatrist, in July. Dr. Olfson will be providing psychiatric services in our partial program as well as outpatient medication management. Lastly, Dr. Lesley Norris is joining PARC’s research team as an NIH T32 fellow and will be contributing to several of PARC’s research initiatives.

## THERAPY COMMUNITY

Please visit [parcanxiety.org](http://parcanxiety.org) to learn more about PARC's current research and clinical initiatives.

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### STANFORD TRANSLATIONAL OCD PROGRAM — RODRIGUEZ LAB

401 Quarry Rd  
Palo Alto, CA 94304  
(650) 723-4095  
[ocdresearch@stanford.edu](mailto:ocdresearch@stanford.edu)  
[med.stanford.edu/rodriguezlab](http://med.stanford.edu/rodriguezlab)

Morehouse School of Medicine student Marcos Ortiz became a treasured member of our lab team as he recently assisted with our research while being part of the Stanford-REACH-HBMC Summer 2023 Research Program. In collaboration with Baylor College of Medicine and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, we are excited to be one of the sites for a new large-scale NIH OCD study, LATINO, "Latin American trans-ancestry genomic analysis of obsessive-compulsive disorder."

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### STRESS AND ANXIETY SERVICES OF NJ

A-2 Brier Hill Court                      195 Columbia Turnpike, Suite 120  
East Brunswick, NJ 08816                      Florham Park, NJ 07932  
(732) 210-6694                                      (201) 486-1266  
[info@stressandanxiety.com](mailto:info@stressandanxiety.com)                      [megancoxpsyd@gmail.com](mailto:megancoxpsyd@gmail.com)  
[stressandanxiety.com](http://stressandanxiety.com)

Stress and Anxiety Services is proud to have supported the training of 40+ clinicians and members of the OCD community as we approach the halfway mark of our ERP webinar series! The full series can still be purchased at a discounted price with past webinars delivered on demand, and your choice of attending future webinars live or on demand. We also have a special, discounted price for trainees and members of the OCD community.

Our team has stayed busy this summer leading a walk for "Mental Health Awareness Week" in East Brunswick, NJ, and making free presentations for the community including a stress management workshop, a self-care workshop, a seminar about anxiety and depression, a presentation on distinguishing normal religiosity from OCD-related scrupulosity, and a live interview for the "OCD Friends Support Group" on Facebook.

Finally, we look forward to welcoming two new trainees — an extern and postdoc — to our team this fall!

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### UPMC WESTERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

100 North Bellefield Ave  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
(412) 246-5600, option 2  
[sufrinla@upmc.edu](mailto:sufrinla@upmc.edu)  
[Upmc.com](http://Upmc.com)

UPMC Western Behavioral Health wishes you all a happy fall! This summer, we opened our new Perinatal OCD and Anxiety

IOP, and continued care in our general OCD IOPs we offer. We are thrilled to be growing and offering expanded care to the Pittsburgh and greater Pennsylvania community. For services in any of our IOP and PHP programs, please ask your current mental health or medical provider to make a referral by contacting us at [upmc.com/iopphpreferral](http://upmc.com/iopphpreferral).

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### USF ROTHMAN CENTER FOR NEUROPSYCHIATRY

601 7th Street South Suite 424  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
(727) 767-8230  
[rothmanctr@usf.edu](mailto:rothmanctr@usf.edu)  
[health.usf.edu/care/pediatrics/services-specialties/rothman](http://health.usf.edu/care/pediatrics/services-specialties/rothman)

The USF Rothman Center is excited to announce that William Hudson, MD, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics has joined our team. Dr. Hudson is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and will serve as our new medical director. The USF Rothman Center offers both telehealth and in-person services for individuals in Florida who are seeking CBT and psychopharmacology for OCD, Tic/Tourette, Anxiety, Misophonia, Hair Pulling/Trichotillomania, Skin Picking, youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders and any of the above conditions, and related disorders.

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### WESTWOOD INSTITUTE FOR ANXIETY DISORDERS

921 Westwood Blvd., Suite 223  
Los Angeles, CA 90024  
(310) 443-1553  
[thewestwoodinstitute@gmail.com](mailto:thewestwoodinstitute@gmail.com)  
[hope4ocd.com](http://hope4ocd.com)


The Westwood Institute for Anxiety Disorders provides comprehensive and holistic treatment for those with OCD-spectrum and comorbid disorders such as body dysmorphic disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, social phobia, and eating disorders. We understand the importance of individualized care, which is why we have implemented a range of new services. These are all arranged through our Executive Director, Dr. Eda Gorbis, in partnership with UCLA's esteemed professors and specialists. Our focus is to return dysfunctional patients into full-functioning individuals. Patients at the Westwood Institute are referred to specialists who can treat each of their specific medical concerns. These services include hormonal therapy, ensuring a tailored approach to address hormonal imbalances that may exacerbate OCD symptoms. We also work alongside Gynecological and Internal Medicine services to address any other medical issues that may arise. Additionally, a new focus at the Westwood Institute has included gastrointestinal medical exams to shed light on the potential connection between gut health, OCD, and mental well-being. All our experts in these fields are committed to providing thorough and all-encompassing evaluations. At the Westwood Institute, we remain dedicated to the inclusion of multidisciplinary teams and services to provide specialized support in the treatment of OCD.

## THEY ARE HERE! THERAPY COMMUNITY

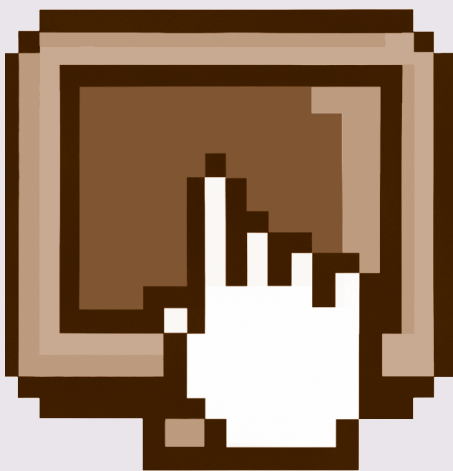
### THE YALE OCD RESEARCH CLINIC

34 Park Street, Clinical Neuroscience Research Unit  
 New Haven, CT 06519  
 (203) 974-7523  
[ocd@yale.edu](mailto:ocd@yale.edu)  
[ocd.yale.edu](http://ocd.yale.edu)

The Yale OCD Research Clinic was founded in the 1980s to advance our understanding of OCD and to pioneer the development of new treatments. In early 2023, we opened a new intensive outpatient program, in partnership with Bridgeport Hospital. Recent research has investigated the use of glutamate modulators in OCD, leading to a Biohaven Pharmaceuticals' current controlled trial of the glutamate modulator troriluzole. We have investigated new strategies for therapeutic brain stimulation to enhance the effects of cognitive behavioral therapy and for neurofeedback as a treatment. We are looking for ways to use brain imaging to identify who will respond to

standard treatments, such as the SSRI antidepressants. And, we are investigating the potential therapeutic benefits of the psychedelic drug psilocybin. We recently published a detailed case report of an individual who experienced profound and lasting benefit after psilocybin treatment; our first controlled study will be wrapping up shortly, and a second one is beginning. In individuals without significant comorbidity, medication, or other complexities, psilocybin treatment seems to be of great benefit to some, though not to everyone. We are working to better understand whether, when, and for whom psychedelic treatments can be of therapeutic benefit in OCD and related disorders. 

## You're Invited to the 2023 Online OCD Conference!



online  
**OCDCD**  
 ■■■■■ conference  
**October 21–22**

The 2023 Online OCD Conference will take place over two days, from Saturday, October 21 through Sunday, October 22, and will feature talks, community discussion groups, and social meet-ups of all kinds and for all members of the OCD and related disorders community.

[iocdf.org/onlineocdcon](http://iocdf.org/onlineocdcon)

co-hosted by the International OCD Foundation and OCD Southern California

## RESEARCH NEWS

### 2023 IOCDF Research Grant Awards

The IOCDF is proud to announce the seven winners of the 2023 Research Grant Awards, who received almost \$1.1 million in funding thanks to the generosity of countless donors.

This year’s awardees will conduct exceptional research on a range of topics — from neuroimaging to treatment augmentation to genetics — with the goal of further informing our understanding of OCD and related disorders and enhancing promising treatments. Following our expanded international promotion of the Research Grant Program, a total of 57 proposals were submitted by research teams from around the world.

One Young Investigator grant totaling \$50,000 is funded by our ongoing partnership with PANDAS Network, the leading non-profit organization dedicated to PANDAS/PANS.

“PANDAS Network appreciates the chance to fund this Stanford University project. This investigation of immune mechanisms could help halt the devastating progressions of PANDAS/PANS. Stanford has been on the frontline for 10 years and we are proud to contribute to their efforts. Research here helps children worldwide, particularly in developing countries where access to care is nearly impossible,” wrote Diana Pohlman, the Executive Director of PANDAS Network.

The seven winning grants summarized below were selected through a highly competitive peer-review process involving a panel of 65 top researchers reviewing grants in their areas of expertise. The most highly rated projects in the first round were then subjected to a second round of scrutiny from the full committee. These winning grants represent the top proposals.

#### INNOVATOR AWARDS

The goal of the three-year Innovator Award is to support “high-risk, high-reward” research with the potential to revolutionize scientific understanding of OCD, accelerate progress toward new and more effective treatments, and discover ways to prevent OCD from taking hold in the first place. These three awards were made possible through the generosity of anonymous donors to the IOCDF.

#### Investigating the brain endocannabinoid system in obsessive-compulsive disorder

Primary Investigators:  
Stefan Kloiber, MD & Jamie Feusner, MD  
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health  
(Toronto, ON, Canada)

Award Amount: \$299,831



Initial research suggests that the brain’s endocannabinoid system is involved in the regulation of OCD symptoms and anxiety. Fatty Acid Amide Hydrolase (FAAH) is an enzyme that regulates levels of an endocannabinoid called anandamide. If an alteration of this enzyme could be linked to OCD, this could improve our understanding of the mechanisms in the brain contributing to OCD and inform development of novel therapies.

This neuroimaging study by Dr. Kloiber, Dr. Feusner, and their team aims to determine, for the first time in humans, whether levels of FAAH are higher in the brains and certain brain regions of individuals suffering from OCD compared to healthy controls. The study will also investigate blood levels of endocannabinoids and activity of brain regions known to be involved in OCD. Results of this study will help us better understand the biological processes involved in OCD and may guide development of more targeted, future treatments.

#### Deep TMS for obsessive-compulsive disorder: An fMRI study

Primary Investigator:  
Abraham Zangen, PhD

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev  
(Beersheba, Israel)

Award Amount: \$285,381



Deep transcranial magnetic stimulation (dTMS), a non-invasive and generally well-tolerated brain stimulation method, was recently granted FDA clearance for the treatment of OCD after pilot studies, real-world data, and a large multi-center study confirmed its efficacy. However, more research into the mechanism of action of dTMS is needed, as well as which type of OCD patients are most likely to benefit from this treatment.

This study by Dr. Zangen and his team will further investigate the mechanism of action of dTMS for OCD using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) before and after the dTMS treatment protocol. Scanning will be conducted during rest and during a behavioral task known to activate brain areas relevant to OCD neuropathology. Thus, modifications to brain activity could be 1) correlated with behavioral and clinical modifications; and 2) be compared to those observed following beneficial pharmacological and behavioral interventions, in the attempt to find a common response circuit and inform our understanding of OCD neurobiology. Finally, the results may offer neurobiological markers that will allow better patient selection for dTMS treatment, making dTMS more effective and predictable for patients.

RESEARCH NEWS

**Personalized neuromodulation for a novel OCD biomarker and treatment**

Primary Investigator:  
Robert Reinhart, PhD

Boston University (Boston, MA)

Award Amount: \$300,000



Although multiple treatments for OCD exist, slow symptom decrease, high remission, and significant side effects for some OCD patients limit their efficacy. More research into the precise neural mechanisms and linked cognitive functions in OCD is also necessary. To address both concerns, this study by Dr. Reinhart and his team will test a new, non-invasive, and well-tolerated neuromodulation method for reducing OCD symptoms, based on reward-related high frequency rhythms in the orbitofrontal cortex (OFC; a brain region responsible for reward, decision making and other crucial functions that is affected by OCD). This proposal is based on highly encouraging preliminary data in both subsyndromal and treatment-resistant populations that shows rapid reductions in OCD behaviors that last at least one to three months.

Using high-definition transcranial alternating current stimulation (HD-tACS) guided by EEG brain wave recordings, the study will test whether repetitive and personalized modulation of relevant rhythmic activity in the OFC can lead to rapid (within five days) and sustainable (up to three months) OCD symptom reduction. It will also test how much the personalized HD-tACS engages these rhythms, and whether these changes can predict the amount of clinical improvement. This research aims to increase knowledge into OCD neurophysiology and develop an effective treatment with minimal side effects.

**MICHAEL A. JENIKE YOUNG INVESTIGATOR AWARDS**

Awardees are promising early career researchers who are working to establish themselves in the field of OCD and related disorders. Three awardees whose projects focus on neuromodulation and perfectionism received funding from thousands of individual donors who contribute to the IOCDF Research Grant Fund every year. One awardee whose research is related to immune responses in PANS received funding from PANDAS Network, the leading nonprofit organization for PANDAS/PANS awareness and research.

**Electrophysiological biomarker characterization in sensing-enabled deep brain stimulation for obsessive-compulsive disorder**

Principal Investigators:  
Ali Tafreshi, MD & Matteo Vissani, PhD  
Massachusetts General Hospital/  
Harvard Medical School (Boston, MA)

Award Amount: \$49,637



Surgery options such as deep brain stimulation (DBS) surgery can provide relief for patients with severe, treatment-resistant OCD. Cutting-edge research has led to the development of new devices that not only electrically stimulate the brain, but can also “sense” brain oscillations with the very same device — allowing for better targeted stimulation of regions associated with OCD. Dr. Tafreshi and his team have already published research identifying an important candidate signal called alpha power that may be a neural marker of OCD. Specifically, they showed that suppression of alpha power in local field potentials in the ventral capsule/ventral striatum brain region correlates with symptom improvement in patients with severe OCD.

The team led by Drs. Tafreshi and Vissani will identify and record changes in alpha power and other brain oscillations during symptomatic and asymptomatic periods, as well as before and after stimulation, medication, and any other treatment changes. The team will identify and record relationships between these variables, seeking patterns linked to clinical symptoms. They hypothesize that effective therapeutic stimulation would reduce alpha power. This project will lay the groundwork for larger-scale clinical trials that further test targeted stimulation and provide new evidence for a concrete OCD biomarker. Understanding how these brain oscillations function may help establish new neuromodulatory targets and may pave the way for safe, patient-specific, and effective treatment for OCD and other psychiatric conditions.

**Transcranial magnetic stimulation effects on urge suppression in obsessive-compulsive disorder using individualized targeting of the postcentral gyrus: A proof-of-concept investigation**

Principal Investigator:  
Goi Khia Eng, PhD  
Nathan Kline Institute for Psychiatric Research  
(Orangeburg, NY)

Award Amount: \$49,999



Many people with OCD experience uncomfortable urge sensations driving their compulsions instead of fear-based ones. These urge sensations are similar to “everyday” urges like blinking and scratching, and become more intense when they are suppressed or delayed. Previous research showed that patients with OCD were less successful than controls in suppressing their eyeblinks when asked, and that more failure in this was linked to more severe sensory phenomena. Greater activity in the postcentral gyrus (a brain region involved in processing sensory information) was also associated with more failures in eyeblink suppression and more severe sensory phenomena, suggesting that this region may underlie pathological urges related to sensory phenomena in OCD.

## RESEARCH NEWS

2023 IOCDF Research Grant Awards *(continued)*

Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) is a form of non-invasive neuromodulation technique that can be used to either reduce or increase activity in a brain region. In a small pilot investigation of four patients with OCD, inhibitory TMS delivered in a single session to an individualized target in the postcentral gyrus (compared to sham TMS) was generally associated with reduced brain activity in this region, improved eyeblink suppression during the eyeblink suppression task, and lower self-report urge to perform compulsions. The current study by Dr. Eng and her team will include a larger sample of patients to continue to test whether TMS delivered using individualized targeting can reduce activity in the postcentral gyrus and improve urge suppression in OCD. This will be the first study to test such a novel approach targeting the brain network of pathological urges in OCD. Findings will provide a critical first step toward treatment trials aimed at reducing pathological urges in OCD to enhance therapeutic outcomes for these difficult-to-treat symptoms.

**A good enough intervention: Testing brief online self-help treatment modules for clinical perfectionism**

Principal Investigators:  
Clarissa Ong, PhD & Eric Lee, PhD  
University of Toledo (Toledo, OH)

*Award Amount: \$47,643*



Clinical perfectionism is a common feature of OCD, and leads to problems when people set extremely high standards for themselves and harshly criticize themselves for not meeting them. This can result in reduced productivity, low self-worth, and increased risk of developing OCD, hoarding disorder, hair-pulling disorder, and body image concerns. It also hinders people from seeking, benefiting from, and continuing treatment. This is especially challenging for people from minority and underserved communities, as they often struggle to find qualified treatment providers.

The team led by Drs. Ong and Lee will conduct a randomized controlled trial to develop and evaluate an online self-help program for perfectionism. This program will consist of multiple brief treatment sessions that users can access any time and select according to their personal requirements. The trial will include 100 participants randomly assigned to either use the online program for four weeks or to read a self-help book on perfectionism. The team will assess changes in perfectionism, quality of life, depression, anxiety, self-compassion, and psychological flexibility over time. The study aims to provide a practical solution to increase treatment engagement and accessibility for perfectionism, particularly for populations lacking adequate treatment options.

**IOCDF/PANDAS NETWORK YOUNG INVESTIGATOR AWARD RECIPIENT**

**The role of regulatory T cells in Pediatric Acute Onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome (PANS): With an emphasis on CD39 + subset**

Principal Investigator:  
Noor Hussein, PhD

Stanford University (Palo Alto, CA)

*Award Amount: \$50,000 (funded by PANDAS Network)*



Pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome (PANS) is a relapsing and remitting disorder, clinically characterized by abrupt (overnight) onset of OCD symptoms, severe irritability, behavioral regression, deterioration in fine motor skills (such as handwriting), inattention, sleep dysregulation, sensory dysregulation, and sometimes changes in urinary frequency. To date, there is no specific therapy for PANS, though some patients respond to antibiotics, anti-inflammatory, and/or antipsychotic drugs. Accumulating evidence suggested that PANS symptoms are associated with inflammation, dysregulation of immune cells, and autoimmunity. Regulatory T cells (Tregs) are key inhibitors of autoimmunity and play an essential anti-inflammatory role. Previous research by Dr. Hussein showed an increase in the percentage of Tregs in the blood of PANS patients who experienced symptoms during a flare-up compared to healthy controls, and a decrease in Tregs during PANS remission. The percentage of CD39+ cells (a marker of highly active and immunosuppressive regulatory T cell subset) was also significantly higher in PANS flare-up patients compared to remission and healthy controls.

Dr. Hussein hypothesizes that the increase in circulating CD39+ Tregs during a PANS flare signals the development of a strong immunosuppressive response to the neuroinflammation of PANS flares and might indicate a defect in Tregs signaling and migration to the brain. She and her team will determine the immunosuppressive activity of CD39+ Treg during PANS flare-up and remission by measuring CD39 enzymatic activity, doing immunosuppression assays, and measuring the Tregs-related anti-inflammatory immunosuppressive molecules (cytokines); and evaluate the migratory capacity of Tregs in PANS by measuring expression levels of cytokine receptors that regulate Treg migration to the brain. Functional stability of Tregs will be analyzed by doing DNA demethylation epigenetic studies. Characterizing the role of CD39+Treg in PANS will lay the groundwork for a potential new PANS therapy, by either replacing faulty Tregs or enhancing functional ones. ①

## Research Participants Sought

The IOCDF is not affiliated with any of the following studies, although we ensure that all research studies listed on this page have been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB). The studies listed include online and in-person studies in the US and abroad.

If you are a researcher who would like to include your research listing in the *OCD Newsletter*, please email Boris Litvin at [blitvin@iocdf.org](mailto:blitvin@iocdf.org) or visit [iocdf.org/research](http://iocdf.org/research).

### Nathan Kline Institute OCD Research Study

We are looking for individuals with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) for our study at the Nathan Kline Institute! The purpose of this study is to look at clinical symptoms, behavior, and brain function in the disorder.

You must:

- Be 18-55 years old
- Be medically healthy
- Have OCD

What would you have to do?

- Some questionnaires about your health and emotions
- A learning task while having your brain activity measured with functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI)

Total participation time is 4 to 10 hours over 1 to 3 visits (some may be done remotely) and pays at a rate of \$25 per hour.

If you want us to contact you to tell you more about the study, please fill out our study interest form: <https://redcap.link/PNCLab>

For more information, call the Psychiatric Neurocognition Laboratory at 845-398-6525, email us at [pnclab@nki.rfmh.org](mailto:pnclab@nki.rfmh.org) or visit us at [psychneurocoglab.com](http://psychneurocoglab.com). Please do not disclose any personal or sensitive information via email.

### Exogenous Modulation of Visual Perception and Connectivity in Body Dysmorphic Disorder

We are recruiting people with Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) or the symptoms of BDD for a study on visual perception in Toronto, Canada. The results from this study will help us understand how the brains of people with BDD, in combination with their behavior and their emotions, contribute to abnormal visual perceptual processing. Importantly, it will also help us understand if techniques to modify visual processing can change perception.

Participation in this study involves 3 study visits within 7-10 days (no more than 16 hours in total). The informed consent discussion and visit 1 will be done online via secure videoconferencing, while the rest of the study visits will

require in-person visits at Toronto Health Network's Toronto Western Hospital. Participation in the study involves the completion of clinical assessments and symptom rating scales, taking photographs of your face to be used in the study tasks, and undergoing a brain MRI scan and TMS stimulation. You will be compensated for your time should you wish to participate and complete all study visits.

To participate or for more information, visit [https://bbp.lab.utoronto.ca/html/tms\\_project.html](https://bbp.lab.utoronto.ca/html/tms_project.html).

### University of Chicago Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) Research Study

We are seeking volunteers for a drug research study for people with OCD. The study is 9 weeks long.

Requirements:

- Ages 18-65
- Taking a study drug by mouth daily for 8 weeks
- Responding to questionnaires
- Completing cognitive tasks on the computer
- Willing to have blood drawn

Qualifying subjects will be compensated.

If interested, go to [surveymonkey.com/r/H3V27H2](https://surveymonkey.com/r/H3V27H2) to fill our prescreening survey or call the study team at 773-703-5523.

Dr. Jon Grant is conducting this study at the University of Chicago.

### Emotional Freedom Techniques for OCD

Study Description

This research is being conducted to investigate the impact of a stress reduction intervention for Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Dr. Stapleton is leading the study in her role within the Faculty Society and Design, Bond University with her colleague Joan Kaylor from the USA.

What you will be asked to do:

If you have been diagnosed with OCD and wish to participate

## RESEARCH NEWS

in a 10-week online, live treatment program for free, you will be sent an online link for the pre-questionnaire survey.

This will take 20 minutes to complete. You will be offered a group session to learn EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques or 'Tapping') for OCD and related issues, and this will be offered once a week for 10 weeks (two hours each session) and will be held online via Zoom in small groups of about 10 adults. You will need access to a camera and microphone and strong internet connection to participate. At the end of the 10-week EFT intervention you will be asked to complete your post questions again (same as the pre-questionnaire) and also via an online survey link 3-months and 6-months later.

What is EFT?

Emotional Freedom Techniques is a type of exposure therapy which includes a physical and talking component. Likened to a version of psychological acupuncture but without the use of fine needles, EFT uses a statement you say out loud while you tap on acupressure points on the face and upper body. The session will teach how to use EFT for OCD behaviours.

Inclusion criteria:

- Diagnosis of OCD: Participants should meet the diagnostic criteria for OCD as outlined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)—this may have been assessed by a licensed health care professional in the past
- Age: 18 years+
- Gender: All
- Medication: Participants are able to continue taking medication during the trial but we will record these for possible effects
- Language: Proficiency in English
- Technology: Access to a device to allow online access to the live sessions
- Having no suicidal intent, drug or alcohol abuse, or psychotic symptoms;
- Having no learning disability or pervasive developmental disability;
- Needing and wanting intervention, and agreeable to randomisation

Exclusion Criteria:

- Current diagnosis of psychosis or current alcohol or substance abuse/dependence;
- English comprehension too poor to engage in treatment; severe disabling neurological disorder; diagnosed global learning disability or pervasive developmental delay; and characteristics interfering with completion of treatment within trial (e.g., a life-threatening or unstable medical illness).

The expected benefits of the research

The possible benefits include clinical symptom relief in OCD and a possible alternative psychological intervention as an option. We will review the results in order to conduct larger trials in the future.

If you are interested in participating and meet the criteria, please complete this registration form here – [https://bond.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_a3G4CKwbWPOJV8W](https://bond.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a3G4CKwbWPOJV8W)

### CBT Augmentation to Promote Medication Discontinuation in Pediatric OCD

Does your child take medication for OCD? If so, check out our study!

Study goal: Determine whether cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) can be helpful for children with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) to discontinue their medication without relapse over 24 weeks.

Who is eligible?

- Ages 7-17
- OCD symptoms for at least 6 months
- OCD medication for 12+ weeks
- Parent and child live in TX

What's involved?

- Free online CBT sessions for 24 weeks
- Randomization at midpoint: If you are in the first group, your child will continue their medication over 12 weeks. If you are in the second group, your child will slowly receive smaller doses of their medication over 12 weeks. 4 assessments throughout the study.

How to enroll? Fill out our eligibility survey (<https://redcap.link/e8m3h786>) or send an email to the address below or call!

For more information: [PowerOCDStudy@bcm.edu](mailto:PowerOCDStudy@bcm.edu) (713) 798-6077. POWER (Promoting OCD WellNess and Resilience)

### Experiences of Religious Obsessions and/or Compulsions

Hello!

We are seeking participants for a study on experiences of religious obsessions and/or compulsions. You must:

1. Be 18+ years old
2. Experience some degree of religious obsessions and/or compulsions (e.g. excessive reassurance-seeking from religious authorities, excessive worry over religious or moral concerns, constant review of any potential instances of sin) — but do not need to experience or be diagnosed with a mental health condition



3. Have significant experience with Christianity, Islam, or Judaism — but you do not need to currently identify with or practice any of these religions

The questionnaire includes questions about demographic information, mental health symptoms, and elements of spirituality and/or religiosity (some may address religious and non-religious forms of harm and/or abuse). The questionnaire will take approximately 20-30 mins. and you will receive a \$5 Amazon gift card upon completion. Your participation will contribute to research on this topic as well as to the development of practical resources for those experiencing religious obsessions and/or compulsions.

Please visit the following link to receive more information or to participate:

[https://hope.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5bXbjLnfXuOitCe](https://hope.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5bXbjLnfXuOitCe)

Thank you for considering! Contact Dr. Kate Finley at [finleyresearch@hope.edu](mailto:finleyresearch@hope.edu) with any questions.

#### National OCD Survey

Living with OCD in the United States? Participate today in the 10-minute National OCD Survey!

Is OCD impacted by:

Where you live?

What you value?

Who you've met?

What you believe?

The Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Baylor College of Medicine is researching the sociocultural context for OCD. The study will help us understand different geographic and cultural influences on the development, presentation, or maintenance of OCD. Our goal is to reach as many adults with OCD as possible in all 50 states so that we can better understand the impact of sociocultural and regional influences on OCD. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes. You will be asked about your OCD symptoms, stressful life events, personal attitudes and experiences, and basic demographics about yourself. You may also be asked about your experiences with and perceptions of exposure therapy for certain OCD symptoms.

You will not be compensated to participate in this survey. However, your participation may benefit the OCD community by contributing to existing knowledge about external factors, such as sociocultural experiences, that may influence OCD. This knowledge may be used to inform mental healthcare of people with OCD. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Caitlin M. Pinciotti at [Caitlin.Pinciotti@bcm.edu](mailto:Caitlin.Pinciotti@bcm.edu).

To access the brief, anonymous survey, go to:  
[https://bcmpsych.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_9LdbaR2yrj0oV7g](https://bcmpsych.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9LdbaR2yrj0oV7g) ①

## Walk with us!

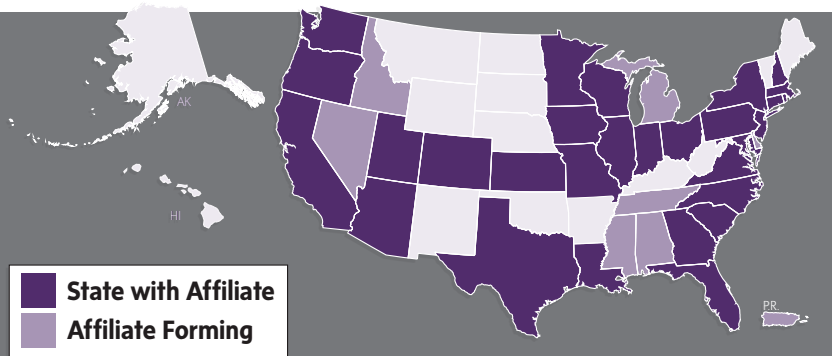
More OCD Walks will take place in October 2023. Visit [iocdf.org/walk](https://iocdf.org/walk) to find a Walk near you and register today!



## FROM THE AFFILIATES

### Affiliate Updates

Our Affiliates carry out the mission of the IOCDF at the local level. Each of our Affiliates is a non-profit organization run entirely by dedicated volunteers. For more info, visit: [iocdf.org/affiliates](https://iocdf.org/affiliates)



#### OCD ARIZONA

[ocdaz.org](https://ocdaz.org)

OCD Arizona is honored to be hosting our very first One Million Steps for OCD Walk. The OCD Walk is scheduled to take place on Sunday, October 15th, 2023, at Kiwanis Park in Tempe, AZ. We are hoping this event will bring together individuals with OCD, their support systems, and providers that treat OCD, as well as anyone else interested in showing support. Please visit our website, [ocdaz.org](https://ocdaz.org), or email us at [info@ocdaz.org](mailto:info@ocdaz.org) for more information.

#### OCD CENTRAL & SOUTH FLORIDA

[ocdcsfl.org](https://ocdcsfl.org)

[facebook.com/OCDCSFL](https://facebook.com/OCDCSFL)

OCD Central & South Florida is excited about our One Million Steps for OCD Walk, which will be held on October 22nd, 2023, in Orlando, FL! If you are interested in being involved, serving as a sponsor, or donating items for our raffle, please contact us.

We're also looking forward to our Art Exhibition and Auction on November 11, 2023, in West Palm Beach, FL! We're seeking creative people to contribute an art piece that embodies what OCD means to you. If OCD has impacted you in any way, either as an individual, family member, clinician, or supporter of the OCD community, we'd love your submission! Artwork will be on display to build awareness for our cause, and then auctioned off as a fundraiser. This event will be an incredible evening with music, hors d'oeuvres, and connections!

Our Affiliate is also partnering with IOCDF to host a Pediatric BTTI, which is scheduled for December 1-3, 2023, in Tampa, FL! We're excited to support the training of more mental health professionals to provide evidence-based treatment for OCD. Contact us to co-sponsor!

Email us at [info@ocdcsfl.org](mailto:info@ocdcsfl.org) with any questions, and check our website and Facebook page for further details on upcoming events!

#### OCD CONNECTICUT

[ocdct.org](https://ocdct.org)

[@ocdct](https://facebook.com/OCConnecticut)

On July 24, we held an OCD awareness and educational event for the community at the Trumbull Library in Trumbull, CT. We had a great turnout, and it was a wonderful opportunity for us to meet with people who wished to learn more about OCD.

In celebration of OCD Awareness Week, we are holding a One Million Steps for OCD Walk on Saturday, October 14 at Jennings Beach in Fairfield, CT, at 9:00 AM (Rain date is October 15). The Walk is designed to promote increased awareness and a supportive community for the IOCDF and our Affiliate. In addition, we are presenting a colloquium entitled "Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: Getting Help and Support for Recovery" on October 18 at Sacred Heart University (SHU) in Fairfield, CT. Dr. Christina Taylor, OCD CT Clinical Board Advisor, and members of the Fairfield County OCD Support Group will discuss the symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of OCD. The presentation is sponsored by The Human Journey Colloquia 2023 Series and is free and open to the public. The panel will be held at 7:00 PM in the Loris Forum in the Martire Building at SHU.

We plan on holding more awareness and educational events in the future.

#### OCD IOWA

[ocdiowa.org](https://ocdiowa.org)

[facebook.com/OCDIowa](https://facebook.com/OCDIowa)

Greetings from Iowa! We are excited to announce our Affiliate has been working hard to get up and running over the past few months. In that time, we have elected our current board members: Jamie Dunn, President; Erin Stevens, Vice-President/Secretary; and Breck Westerly, Treasurer/Assistant Secretary. Erin attended the Annual OCD Conference in San Francisco representing our new Affiliate, and brought back some great energizing and helpful information for us moving forward. We have formed a walk committee, secured our location, and are working to get the word out about our first officially hosted Des Moines One Million Steps for OCD Walk to be held Saturday, October 14th at Gray's Lake. Our current focus is to spread the word about this exciting, and much-needed resource in our state, so that we can work towards offering events and building our volunteer base for the future. You can find us at our newly

## FROM THE AFFILIATES

formed Facebook page or website! If you are interested in joining our mailing list for future opportunities please reach out to [info@ocdiowa.org](mailto:info@ocdiowa.org).

### OCD JACKSONVILLE

[facebook.com/OCDJAX](https://facebook.com/OCDJAX)  
@ocdjax

OCD Jacksonville welcomed new board member Christie Hingst. She is passionate about her faith, her husband, their two teenage daughters, and, of course, FSU football! She says, "My OCD was well managed for many years on Prozac until I hit menopause several years ago. When I sought treatment, I was told by multiple therapists and an intensive OCD outpatient program that I 'failed' the gold standard for OCD treatment (ERP). I was determined to not give up on myself and my recovery, when I stumbled upon I-CBT (inference based cognitive therapy) online. A former OCD Jax board member put me in contact with a therapist who providentially was trained in ICBT. It was an honor to share my story on JAX\_MHA, participate in an IOCDF livestream panel in the spring, and participate in an I-CBT clinicians panel sharing my story. As the newest member to the OCD Jax board, it is my sincere hope and prayer that my journey will give others with OCD the strength and courage to never quit seeking treatment options. There truly is help and hope!"

### OCD MASSACHUSETTS

[ocdmassachusetts.org](https://ocdmassachusetts.org)  
[facebook.com/OCDMassachusetts](https://facebook.com/OCDMassachusetts)  
@ocdmassachusetts

In April, OCDMA offered two scholarship opportunities for licensed clinicians in the state of Massachusetts to attend the 2023 intensive three-day training of the Pediatric Behavior Therapy Training Institute (BTTI). There is a need for more mental health professionals utilizing effective and empirically proven methods for treating youth affected by OCD. This need is even greater for those with OCD among the Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) youth in under-resourced families and communities. Our goal is to offer these scholarships each year moving forward.

OCDMA also participated in the One Million Steps for OCD Walk on June 3rd in Boston. We want to thank those who entered our OCDMA swag contest. Maia Fattahi was the winner this year with her "You Got this!" artwork. Maia stated, "It was such a joyful experience getting to see so many people at the Walk in Boston enjoying my artwork and taking it home with them as a motivating reminder when the recovery road gets rocky."

To keep updated with OCDMA events and opportunities, be sure to follow us on Instagram and Facebook.

### OCD MID-ATLANTIC

[ocdmidatlantic.org](https://ocdmidatlantic.org)  
[facebook.com/OCDMidAtlantic](https://facebook.com/OCDMidAtlantic)

OCD Mid-Atlantic is currently planning for OCD Awareness Week and the One Million Steps for OCD Walk to be held at Valley Mill Special Park in Colesville, MD, on October 7. Check the

website ([ocdmidatlantic.org](https://ocdmidatlantic.org)) for more information. We took a break from our online OCD 101 series of talks for the summer but should have new events on the calendar soon. You can sign up on the website and we also welcome thoughts on particular topics people would like to hear more about.

We still have a few spots for more board members and would especially like to invite individuals with OCD and/or family members to join us. Please email us through the website if you are interested in getting involved.

### OCD MIDWEST

[ocd-midwest.org](https://ocd-midwest.org)  
[facebook.com/OCDMidwestAffiliate](https://facebook.com/OCDMidwestAffiliate)  
@ocdmidwest

OCD Midwest sponsored a CE Webinar entitled "Treating Body-Focused Repetitive Behaviors: Using Awareness, Compassion, and Evidence-Based Practices" on May 5, featuring OCD Midwest board member Lisa Conway, PhD, as a presenter. We provided several scholarships to clinicians who work with underserved populations. We also published a new YouTube video titled "OCD Treatment: Fact vs. Fiction" featuring several of our board members on our YouTube channel (@ocdmidwest5022). We continue to sponsor numerous monthly consult groups for OCD and BFRBs in the Midwest region. We are currently at work redesigning our logo and website and are partnering with Wild Jack Creatives for this rebranding: [wildjackcreatives.com](https://wildjackcreatives.com)

### OCD NEW HAMPSHIRE

[ocdnewhampshire.org](https://ocdnewhampshire.org)  
[facebook.com/OCDNH](https://facebook.com/OCDNH)  
@ocd\_new\_hampshire

We are gearing up for OCD Awareness Week! Our third annual ERP training for clinicians will be held on Friday, October 13th, at Rivier University in Nashua, NH, with instruction from Executive Board Member and clinical psychologist Dr. David Bradley. Our board is currently planning other OCD Awareness Week events, such as in-person and virtual film screenings, and meet-ups for our support group participants. Beyond OCD Awareness Week, we'll be continuing to host SPACE training this fall and have board officer elections on the horizon for 2024.

### OCD NEW JERSEY

[ocdnj.org](https://ocdnj.org)  
[facebook.com/OCDNewJersey](https://facebook.com/OCDNewJersey)  
@ocd\_newjersey

On Sunday, June 4, 2023, OCD New Jersey held its One Million Steps for OCD Walk in support of the IOCDF and raised \$11,000 this year. That's more than \$3,000 over the past year!

We had beautiful weather for the Walk. More than 70 walkers came out to participate, connect with one another, and raise awareness of OCD. Thanks to DJ Luis, we had a pumped up crowd. Our initial fundraising goal was to raise \$7,500 and we far exceeded our goal. Thank you to all who joined us that day!

## FROM THE AFFILIATES

Mark your calendars! OCD New Jersey will hold its annual conference on February 25, 2024, 10am-3pm, featuring invited keynote speaker Michael Heady, LCPC, who will present "Inference-Based CBT: A New Hope for OCD." In addition, a panel of individuals will share their lived experiences with OCD and related disorders in an interactive "Living with OCD" Q&A session, with discussant, Marla Deibler, PsyD, ABPP. Details and registration will be available prior to the event at [ocdnj.org](http://ocdnj.org).

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### OCD NEW YORK

[ocdnewyork.org](http://ocdnewyork.org)  
[@ocdny](https://www.facebook.com/ocdny)

Join us this Fall for our One Million Steps for OCD Walks. Our Upstate NY Walk will be held on October 14 at the Ellicott Creek Trailway in Buffalo, and our Long Island Walk will be held on October 28th in Eisenhower Park. Register at [iocdf.org/walk](http://iocdf.org/walk). We hope to see you there!

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### OCD PENNSYLVANIA

[ocdpennsylvania.org](http://ocdpennsylvania.org)

OCD PA is excited about upcoming Walks in the Erie, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia areas this fall. We are also looking forward to working with our new social media coordinator to promote OCD activities and services.

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### OCD SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

[ocdsocal.org](http://ocdsocal.org)  
[facebook.com/OCDSocal](https://www.facebook.com/OCDSocal)  
[@ocdsocal](https://www.instagram.com/ocdsocal)

After holding our own successful virtual OCD Southern California Conference, OCD Southern California is beyond excited to announce that we are now collaborating with the International OCD Foundation to bring you the 2023 Online OCD Conference! This allows OCD SoCal to expand our reach and offer resources, community, education, and hope to more individuals around the globe!

The Online OCD Conference is a two-day, virtual weekend event from Saturday, October 21st to Sunday, October 22nd that is jam-packed with educational programming for those in the OCD and related disorders community, including:

- Individuals with lived experience
- Family members & supporters
- Pre-licensed trainees & students
- Mental health professionals

Each session and its following Q&A, Community Discussion Groups, and our Virtual Keynote will all be broadcast live via Zoom, meaning anyone can attend from anywhere in the world! Session presentations and the Keynote will be available on-demand for 60 days following the event, giving you plenty of time to access all of the #OnlineOCDCon programming.

Registration is now open for the Online OCD Conference; head over to the IOCDF's website! OCD SoCal is excited to co-host this conference with the IOCDF!

Email us at [info@ocdsocal.org](mailto:info@ocdsocal.org) for more information and see you in October!

### OCD TEXAS

[ocdtexas.org](http://ocdtexas.org)  
[facebook.com/ocdtexasforsure](https://www.facebook.com/ocdtexasforsure)  
[@ocd-texas](https://www.instagram.com/ocd-texas)

OCD Texas was so excited to hold One Million Steps for OCD Walks on September 30th in Austin and Dallas! We are grateful for our platinum sponsors: Better Living Behavioral Health, Healgood Counseling, and Austin Anxiety and OCD Specialists. A special thank you to our gold sponsors: Capital OCD and Anxiety Program, Anxiety Treatment Center of Austin, Hill Country Anxiety, and Brave Young Minds. Thank you to our silver sponsors: Texas Hills Anxiety and OCD, Specialists in OCD and Anxiety Recovery, The Learning Collective, Central Texas OCD and Anxiety Center, OCD and Anxiety Specialists of Dallas, and the OCD Clinic at Baylor College of Medicine. Thank you to our bronze sponsors: Rachel Burgreen, LCSW, and DFW Center for OCD and Anxiety. If you would like to volunteer at the walk, please contact [volunteer@ocdtexas.org](mailto:volunteer@ocdtexas.org).

OCD Texas is excited to present at the Texas Psychological Association about Artificial Intelligence for Exposures and Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions. OCD Texas is also excited to support a local advocate presenting on OCD in Youth at the local NAMI conference.

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### OCD WASHINGTON

[facebook.com/ocdWASHINGTON](https://www.facebook.com/ocdWASHINGTON)  
[@ocd\\_washington](https://www.instagram.com/ocd_washington)

Check out our Instagram or Facebook while OCD Washington's website is under construction! We've got a lot going on this fall. We were excited for our annual OCD Walk held October 1st at Seward Park. It was a fantastic opportunity to meet members of the community, raise awareness, and enjoy the fall leaves. We appreciate everyone who came out and showed their support! If you're interested in being involved in future Walks and meeting some awesome members of the community, please email us at [info@ocdWASHINGTON.org](mailto:info@ocdWASHINGTON.org)

In November, WA OCD is proud to be hosting a BTTI Training along with the Evidence Based Treatment Center of Seattle.

Finally, look for updates about monthly free yoga events sponsored by OCD WA! We'd love to see you there!

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### OCD WISCONSIN

[ocdwisconsin.org](http://ocdwisconsin.org)

OCD WI added two new members this year — John Kielich and Sarah Francois. This summer, OCD WI hosted an "Ask the Experts" panel event where members of the community were able to get together and get their questions answered and get support by a diverse panel involving individuals with lived experience, social workers, etc. OCD WI also returned with Beyond Treatment Network in September, and continue our programming on a monthly basis. Stay tuned on our social media pages for updates! 📍