

Bios & Presentations

8th Annual ETHICS in Professional Practice Conference

Friday, August 7, 2020, Online LIVE Conference* (*Recordings will be available for 10 days post-conference*)

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Jennifer Zarcone, PhD, BCBA-D

Senior Vice President for Adult Clinical Services and Training, May Institute



Jennifer Zarcone is the Senior Vice President for Adult Clinical Services and Training at May Institute. Dr. Zarcone provides consultation and clinical support to staff around severe problem behavior, staff and parent training, and medication monitoring.

Dr. Zarcone obtained her doctoral degree from the Experimental Analysis of Behavior program at the University of Florida, Department of Psychology, in 1993. She is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and a licensed psychologist.

Dr. Zarcone has served as a co-investigator on several multi-center clinical trials in autism research at the University of Rochester Medical Center, and on self-injury at the Kennedy Krieger Institute. She is interested in further development of research in the effects of pharmacological and behavioral interventions in the treatment of severe behavior disorders as well as repetitive behavior disorders in individuals with autism.

Dr. Zarcone has served in leadership positions for the Association of Behavior Analysis (ABAI) on the ABAI Practice Board, and she is a current member of the Science Board. She was the conference coordinator for the annual Autism Conference and a Fellow of ABAI. She served as an associate editor for the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, and is currently an associate editor for the *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities Research*, and the *American Journal of Developmental Disabilities*. She is serving as Guest Editor for the *Behavior Analysis in Practice* special issue on Diversity and Inclusion. In addition, Dr. Zarcone is currently on the advisory boards for the Women in Behavior Analysis Conference and the Gatlinburg Conference for Research in Developmental Disabilities.

10:30-11:30 am (Eastern/NY) | 7:30-8:30 am (Pacific/CA)

“Ethical Implications of a Biobehavioral Approach to Functional Analysis”

This presentation will focus on a variety of biological, medical and psychiatric conditions that may act as setting events or establishing operations for challenging behavior. Specifically, the role that psychotropic medication can play in addressing the mental health needs of individuals with autism will be discussed. In addition, we will look at some biological interventions that may or may not be very promising in the treatment of problem behavior.

Learning Objectives

- Attendees will learn how certain biobehavioral antecedent or setting event conditions can affect problem behavior and how they can evaluate them.
- Attendees will receive information on current psychotropic medications being used to treat problem behavior and how their effects can be effectively measured.
- Attendees will look at how some “alternative” biological treatments for problem behavior may or may not have some promise in the treatment of problem behavior.

The Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies™ is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that harnesses the expertise of hundreds of behavioral scientists to solve problems in the home, school, community, and the workplace.

Our Mission: To advance the scientific study of behavior and its humane application to the solution of practical problems, including the prevention and relief of human suffering.

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Ronald Allen, PhD, BCBA

Associate Professor and Practice & Doctoral Program Director, Department of Behavior Analysis
Simmons University



Ron Allen received his doctorate thirty years ago from the University of Florida (Go Gators). Ron has worked both in the areas of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior and Applied Behavior Analysis. In the latter capacity he has directed three residential schools for adolescents with behavior disorders, including most recently serving for 18 years as the Director of the Ivy Street School for adolescents with brain injury. Currently he is an Associate Professor of Practice and Director of the Doctoral Program in the Department of Behavior Analysis at Simmons University. He is also the Director of Behavioral Treatment Services for Riverside Community Care supporting adult individuals with developmental disabilities and behavioral challenges. His research interests include brain injury, the management of negatively reinforced challenging behavior, adjunctive behavior, derived stimulus relations, conditioned reinforcement, and the philosophy of Behaviorism. He is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA-D) and is licensed as an Applied Behavior Analyst in Massachusetts (LABA). He serves on the Board of Directors of the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies, on the Advisory Board for QBS, Inc., and as a member of a Peer Review Committee for the MA Department of Developmental Services. He is a member of ABAI, BABAT, and The Massachusetts Brain Injury Association.

11:35 am -12:35 pm (Eastern/NY) | 8:35-9:35 am (Pacific/CA)

“Forgotten Lessons on the Road to an Ethical Applied Science of Behavior”

It is undeniably a sign of the maturity of an applied science of behavior to develop and embrace a thorough code of ethics. Consistent with such a code is the guarantee to provide adult individuals with developmental disabilities the civil rights enjoyed by adult individuals without similar disabilities. However, the interplay and competition between the right to habilitation and the right to personal liberties as outlined in Bannerman, Sheldon, Sherman, & Harchik (1990) has yet to be fully resolved. It is here argued that civil rights associated with choice making should be afforded in step with the development and demonstration of foundational choice-making skills. Furthermore, it is argued that such development and demonstration provides the ultimate dignity for the adults we serve. Some initial thoughts on the assessment of choice-making are provided, in line with the assessment of other skills in the repertoires of the individuals we serve.

Learning Objectives

- Attendees will identify at least one advantage and one disadvantage related to allowing clients to exercise personal liberties (e.g., choice making).
- Attendees will state the mand versus tact properties of preference assessments with and without access.
- Attendees will list at least three foundational skills for choice-making.

Lani Fritts, MBA

Chief Executive Officer, Kadiant



Lani left a 15 year career in logistics and technology related companies, and in 2009 he co-founded Trumpet Behavioral Health, a leading provider of Applied Behavior Analysis and related services to individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Since that time, Lani has been active in the ABA provider community, advocating for access to services and developing and sharing organizational and clinical standards. Lani was a founding board member and the first treasurer of The Council for Autism Service Providers (CASP), a nonprofit association focused on cultivating, sharing, and advocating for provider best practices in autism services. Lani has an undergraduate degree in Economics from Georgetown University and an MBA from the Stanford University Graduate School of Business.

continued

Lani Fritts, MBA *continued*

12:50-1:50 pm (Eastern/NY) | 9:50-10:50 am (Pacific/CA)

“Mergers, Acquisitions and Private Investors and the Impact on Clinical Services and the Mission”

The field of Behavior Analysis has gone through monumental changes over the past decade, substantially resulting from the continued rise in diagnostic rates and by the expansion of services funding options for families of individuals on the Autism Spectrum, which as of this year, now includes mandated commercial health insurance coverage in all 50 states. These dynamics have substantially increased demand for services, driving expansion in BCBA programs educating new behavior analysts, an explosion in the number of new certificants, and a substantial increase in the numbers and size of for profit and not-for-profit organizations attempting to serve this rapidly growing demand. These market factors have also substantially increased mergers and acquisitions and the interest of traditional healthcare services investors in the field, which has resulted in substantial private equity capital flowing into the companies serving the ASD community.

This presentation will explore the supply and demand dynamics driving this interest in the field, the implications of investment capital flowing into the field, and the pitfalls and the opportunities these dynamics represent for families, clinicians, and organizations.

Learning Objectives

- Attendees will be able to identify the economic factors impacting the increasing investment and M&A activities in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis.
- Attendees will be able to identify some risks this activity might pose to the priorities of an organization and the contingencies that have the potential to interfere with mission focus and clinical excellence.
- Attendees will be able to identify strategies to mitigate the risks posed by rapid growth, mergers, and private investment in an ABA organization.

Rita M. Gardner, MPH, LABA, BCBA

President and CEO, Melmark



Rita M. Gardner is President and CEO of Melmark, a multi-state human service provider with premier private special education schools, professional development, training and research centers. Rita has devoted 35 years to non-profit management in the field of community-based services for children and adults with the diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders, acquired brain injuries, neurological disorders and severe challenging behaviors. In addition to leading Melmark's \$95-million operations across all of its divisions, Rita is the co-founder of Melmark New England in Andover, Massachusetts and a co-founder of Melmark Carolinas in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Rita has been recognized by the Commonwealth Institute and Boston Globe, on the organizations' list of Top 100 Women-Led Businesses in Massachusetts for the past two years (#35 in 2018 and TBA in 2019). She is dedicated to creating opportunities for skills growth and advancement for women in the field of human services. Rita does this through her work with CASP (Council of Autism

Service Providers), for which she and Melmark are founding members; her leadership role as a board member of maaps (Massachusetts Association of Approved Private Schools); and her vital role in WIBA (Women in Behavior Analysis), for which Rita volunteers her time and expertise as a mentor.

As a result of her far-reaching work, Rita is known throughout the disability community as a tireless advocate for services for children and adults with intellectual disabilities and autism. She has provided project consultation to nationally-renowned organizations and was appointed to Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick's Special Commission Relative to Autism in 2010. She continues to serve in that capacity, appointed by the current Governor Charles Baker. Rita has testified before the legislature on numerous issues related to Autism Spectrum Disorders, written articles for professional journals, and made a number of presentations on topics ranging from program expansion and behavior management to transitioning students with brain injury back into the community.

continued

Rita M. Gardner, MPH, LABA, BCBA *continued*

Rita has been involved in the organization, design, development and implementation of over 100 community-based programs for children and adults. Her professional experience is focused on high level organizational design using her skills in child advocacy, clinical practice, health service administration, legal issues, public policy and fundraising. Her demonstrated focus on fiscal prudence, ability to build bridges with funding sources, and experience in the development and ongoing maintenance of donor relationships, ensures the future of services for individuals with intellectual disabilities, at Melmark and beyond.

Rita received her Master of Public Health degree from Boston University's School of Public Health in the School of Medicine. Most important, she holds the heart of Melmark's mission at the core of her professional standards. She is dedicated to every child, adult and family served at Melmark, as well as every member of Melmark's professional staff.

2:35-3:35 pm (Eastern/NY) | 11:35 am - 12:35 pm (Pacific/CA)

“Ensuring Organizational Ethics: Another Case for Organizational Behavior Management”

Behavior Analysts often operate in the context of larger settings that may include many other professions. The BACB's code of Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts requires under *1.0 (Responsible Conduct of Behavior Analysts)* that *behavior analysts maintain the high standards of behavior of the profession. Furthermore, the code specifies in section 1.01 that there is a Reliance on Scientific Knowledge. (Behavior analysts rely on professionally derived knowledge based on science and behavior analysis when making scientific or professional judgments in human service provision, or when engaging in scholarly or professional endeavors).* Ensuring that organizational systems are set up to promote compliance with the BACB ethics code may be a challenge when individuals in positions of Leadership in Human Service Organizations (HSO's) are often not credentialed in the field of Behavior Analysis. We are seeing a rapid growth in organizations who claim to be Applied Behavior Analytic Providers, including those funded through Private Equity, whose goals may or may not be value based, and may be strictly monetary. It is critical for organizations to maintain a commitment to our ethical guidelines, and to create systems that ensure a professional work environment for all employees that maintains compliance with the BACB's ethical codes. The goal of this presentation is to review how the code of ethics should inform the development of any ABA organizations' operational systems.

Learning Objectives

- Attendees will gain an understanding how the BACB code of ethics can inform an HSO's development of organizational behavior management systems.
- Attendees will gain an understanding, as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, of your own responsibility to identify and inform leadership of organizational non-compliance with the BACB code of ethics.
- Attendees will be able to identify an HSO's systems that monitor and establish employee protocols to ensure ethical employee behavior that complies with the BACB code of ethics.

David J. Cox, PhD, MSB, BCBA-D

Principal Analyst of Behavioral Science & Analytics Department of Data Science, GuideWell
Adjunct Faculty, Endicott College



David is a Principal Analyst of Behavioral Science and Analytics in the Department of Data Science at GuideWell. His graduate education and training spans behavior analysis (PhD), behavioral economics (post-doc), data science (post-doc), and bioethics (MS). David has worked in Applied Behavior Analysis since 2006 with ages ranging from children to adults and with diagnoses spanning developmental disabilities, psychoses, anxiety, and behavioral health. His basic research foci are quantitative and computational analyses of choice, complex verbal behavior, behavioral health, ethical behavior, and scaling basic and applied research in these areas to population behavioral health, health decision making, and clinical ethics.

continued

David J. Cox, PhD, MSB, BCBA-D *continued*

3:40-4:40 pm (Eastern/NY) | 12:40-1:40 pm (Pacific/CA)
“Moral Philosophy, Ethical Theories, and Applied Ethics”

To be alive is to reside in the expanse of constant choice. Choice about how to live and choice about what to value. Ethics. Moral philosophers have long debated how we know what choice is right and why that choice is best. When observed over time, patterns of ethical choice and justification aggregate into ethical theories that can guide ethical decision-making in novel scenarios. Ethical theories become practically relevant in the domain of applied ethics – the application of ethical theory and moral philosophy to real-world decisions made under time constraints, with missing information, and socially significant uncertain consequences. Far from esoteric and abstract, ethical theories have direct relevance for everyday ethical decision-making in professional practice. This presentation reviews common ethical theories, research on ethical decision-making, and how ethical theories and research help practitioners develop systems to improve their professional practice.

Learning Objectives

- Attendees will be able to name 5 major ethical theories and describe the approach to ethical decision-making used by each theory.
- Attendees will be able to define normative and ethical behavior and describe why applied ethics requires data collection on both.
- Attendees will be able to describe current methods for researching ethics and how these can be used in professional practice.

Noor Y. Syed, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA/LBS

Clinical Director, Lehigh University Autism Services
 Faculty, Lehigh University, Department of Education and Human Services
 Research Coordinator, Global Autism Project



Noor Syed, PhD, BCBA-D is faculty with and the Clinical Director of Lehigh University Autism Services (LUAS). She is also a Research Coordinator and Clinical Consultant with the Global Autism Project. Prior to this, Dr. Syed was an Assistant Professor of Special Education with Manhattanville College. Dr. Syed is a certified general and special education teacher, birth through grade six, and a licensed behavior analyst in New York, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania. She has worked with individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and developmental disabilities for over 10 years from early intervention through adulthood. Dr. Syed received her undergraduate degree in Applied Behavior Analysis under Dr. Raymond G. Romanczyk in the Institute of Child Development at Binghamton University and completed her PhD in ABA with Dr. R. Douglas Greer at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Dr. Syed has consulted for autism clinics around the world, including in Uganda, India, Romania, Antigua and Barbuda, and Indonesia and currently serves as the international and school-based expert on ABAethicsHotline.com with Dr. Jon Bailey. Her research interests lie in effective supervision as well as ethical, sustainable, and culturally humble practices. Most recently, Dr. Syed authored a set of criterion-referenced proficiency standards for RBTs and BCBA trainees. Dr. Syed is also currently engaging in international research collaborations with clinical sites in the Czech Republic, Kenya, and the Dominican Republic.

continued

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Noor Y. Syed, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA/LBS *continued*

4:55-5:55 pm (Eastern/NY) | 1:55-2:55 pm (Pacific/CA)

“Towards an Ethical Behavior Analytic Organization: Compassion, Cultural Humility, and Sustainability”

This presentation will describe lessons learned and research utilized in building and maintaining an ethical insurance based behavior analytic organization (namely, a university-based autism clinic) and practicum site. Having a background in behavior analysis programming and supervision is critical, but also vital is knowledge of leadership, business, and sustainability practices. Of paramount importance is dedication at all levels within an organization on creating cultures of ethical operational practices which subsequently lead to sustainability. Further, a strong emphasis is placed on compassion, collaboration, and cultural humility — and always admitting mistakes! To better understand all aspects, we formed verbal communities, solicited stakeholder input (i.e, community members, caregivers, staff, and students), and engaged in continuous evaluation of our methodologies throughout development of the clinic and practicum coursework. We will also learn from leaders in the field who have built local and global organizations in behavior analysis, discovering common themes across their businesses, as well as unique. Finally, tools will be provided that can guide your own development of an ethical, sustainable organization and practicum framework.

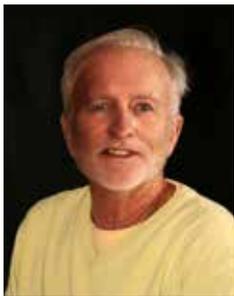
Learning Objectives

- Attendees will be able to describe and engage in methods to build a culture of ethics, compassion, cultural humility, and sustainability within a behavior analytic organization.
- Attendees will be able to gain an understanding of how to build a hierarchical and sustainable practicum framework.
- Attendees will be able to identify challenges and potential solutions in developing a behavior analytic organization and local and broader levels.

OPENING REMARKS by

Rob Holdsambeck, EdD, LCP, BCBA-D

Executive Director, Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies™ and Founder, Holdsambeck Behavioral Health



Dr. Holdsambeck is a licensed psychologist with over 40 years of clinical experience delivering services to people with developmental disabilities, including those on the autism spectrum. He was one of the first to become board certified in behavior analysis (#0007). The company he founded, currently named Holdsambeck Behavioral Health, employs over 250 clinicians serving 1500+ individuals annually in California and Hawaii. Previously he served his country as a Captain in the Air Force and his community as a tenured professor of behavior analysis and human sexuality. He was selected as the 2010 distinguished colleague by the Chicago School of Professional Psychology's Department of Applied Behavior Analysis. In 2011, he received the outstanding service award from the Cambridge Center for his work in bringing evidence-based practices to California. Dr. Holdsambeck is an author

and frequent keynote speaker at national and state conferences. His most recent publications are the highly acclaimed books, *Behavior Science: Tales of Inspiration, Discovery, and Service* (Holdsambeck and Pennypacker Eds., 2017, Volumes I -3 and Omnibus). In addition to the activities mentioned above, Dr. Holdsambeck is currently serving, pro bono, as the Executive Director of the prestigious Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies™.

Mary Jane Weiss, PhD, BCBA-D

Director of Programs in Autism and ABA, Institute for Behavioral Studies, Van Loan School at Endicott College



Mary Jane Weiss, PhD, BCBA-D is a Professor at Endicott College, where she directs the Master's Program in ABA and Autism. Dr. Weiss has worked in the field of ABA and Autism for almost 30 years. She received her PhD in Clinical Psychology from Rutgers University in 1990 and she became a Board Certified Behavior Analyst in 2000. She previously worked for 16 years at the Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center at Rutgers University, where she served as Director of Research and Training and as Clinical Director. Her clinical and research interests center on defining best practice ABA techniques, evaluating the impact of ABA in learners with autism, teaching social skills to learners with autism, training staff to be optimally effective at instruction, and maximizing family members' expertise and adaptation.

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Melmark is a multi-state human service provider with premier private special education schools, professional development, training, and research centers in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and the Carolinas. The not-for-profit organization provides clinically-sophisticated evidence-based special education, residential, vocational and therapeutic services for children and adults diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, developmental and intellectual disabilities, acquired brain injuries, medical complexities, and other neurological and genetic disorders. Melmark's applied behavior analytic programs are offered in the least restrictive environment possible.

Melmark is committed to providing exceptional applied behavior analytic services to every individual, every day. With a vision to expand and raise the quality of service delivery systems throughout the country by disseminating and replicating the Melmark Model of Program Development and Clinical Treatment, Melmark embraces the following core commitments: Compassionate Care, Integrity in Everything We Do, Highly Skilled Workforce, Evidence-Based Practices, and Best Outcomes. To learn more, visit www.melmark.org.



Our goal is to fuse science and learning to accelerate progress and transform lives. We were established in 2006 with a simple focus on providing excellent therapy for children with autism and building a unique and fun environment for team members and children to thrive. We live by the culture we've created and our core values: to create a fun and stimulating learning environment, empower individuals and treat them with kindness, integrity, and respect, never sit still, achieve, and continuously raise the bar, team above the individual, build a sustainable organization that leaves a meaningful impact on lives, and adhere to our core principles without compromise. Learn more through www.biermanaba.com.