

## Light After Loss Annual Postvention Convention Speaker Bios and Contact Information



**Shannon Ortiz, LPCC-S, CCTP**  
*CEO and Founder of Light After Loss*  
[ortizsl@lightafterlossstark.org](mailto:ortizsl@lightafterlossstark.org)

Shannon is the Founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Light after Loss. Shannon lost her husband, Craig, to suicide August 3, 2016, leaving her and their two young girls behind. She was the Director of Counseling Services at The University of Mount Union and the President of NAMI Stark County at the time. She was certainly no stranger to the struggles of mental health and suicide as it was something she helped people cope with everyday. Despite that, the last thing she ever dreamed of was being on the other side of that coin. Craig had struggled with Bipolar Disorder for many years, but just like everyone else, she never thought he or she would become a statistic. In 2018, Shannon stepped down from her position at both Mount Union and NAMI Stark County to heal; to help her two young daughters heal. After being a counselor for nearly 10 years, she also learned that the grief and trauma related to loss survivors is unique to only those who have experienced it. Survivors are at an increased risk of taking their own lives often due to unresolved emotions surrounding the unimaginable. As a result of her own difficult, and often lonely, journey through the grief and trauma of suicide loss she wants to be a light for others; spreading hope for healing.



**Dr. Melinda Moore, Ph.D.**  
*Department of Psychology at Eastern Kentucky University*  
[Melinda.moore@eku.edu](mailto:Melinda.moore@eku.edu)

Dr. Melinda Moore is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) in Richmond, Kentucky, and part of the core faculty for a Clinical Psychology doctoral program there. She routinely trains clinicians in the empirically supported suicide focused treatment framework, the Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS), and is in private practice in Lexington, Kentucky. Dr. Moore works at the intersection of faith and suicide prevention. She published *The Suicide Funeral: Honoring their Memory, Comforting their Survivors* and *After the Suicide Funeral: Wisdom on the Path to Posttraumatic Growth* (both Wipf & Stock) with her co-editor Rabbi Dan Roberts. She conducts suicide bereavement research at Eastern Kentucky University with an emphasis on Posttraumatic Growth ([www.suicideposttraumaticgrowth.com](http://www.suicideposttraumaticgrowth.com)). Dr. Moore received her PhD from The Catholic University of America.

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**Molly Mottram**

*Chief of Staff of Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation*

[molly.mottram@ohiospf.org](mailto:molly.mottram@ohiospf.org)

As the Chief Operating Officer, Molly brings more than 10 years of experience from the public and private sectors to support OSPF's legislative, advocacy, and programmatic efforts. Prior to joining OSPF, Molly spent five years with the Ohio Department of Insurance working on mental health parity and implementing a robust consumer outreach program for mental health insurance benefits. She is a graduate of The Ohio State

University and has always had a passion for mental health advocacy and helping empower and give a voice to those struggling with mental illness. Molly lives in Columbus with her husband and is a new mom to her daughter and has two golden retrievers, Walter and Ditka.



**Maureen Pollard, Registered Social Worker (Ontario)**

*Maureen Pollard & Associates*

[maureenpollardmsw@gmail.com](mailto:maureenpollardmsw@gmail.com)

Maureen Pollard, MSW, RSW, operates a group private practice in Ontario, Canada. With 32 years of experience in the field, Maureen specializes in supporting people integrating grief and trauma experiences, as well as supporting first responders and frontline professionals with resilience recovery through education, critical incident support, and wellness programming. Maureen is the author of *The Twentieth Year: A Memoir of Miscarriage*, *Best Interests: A Novel*, and *What I Wish for You*, a book of affirmations. As part of her own self-preservation and resilience strategy Maureen also writes songs, sings, and plays a little guitar.

Some of her songs have been produced to raise funds and awareness for Canadian charities.

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**Kailey Bradley, LPCC-S**  
*Refuge Counseling, LLC*  
[kailey@allrefuge.com](mailto:kailey@allrefuge.com)

Kailey is a licensed professional clinical counselor with supervision designation (MA, LPCC-S) in the state of Ohio and is also a board-certified counselor (NCC). Kailey has received designation from ADEC (Association of Death Educators and Counselors) as a certified Thanatologist. Kailey has a background in hospice work and feels that companionship and advocating for grievers is her life's passion. Kailey believes that grief is not a problem to be solved or a diagnosis to fix. Kailey specializes in the integration of spirituality, illness, and grief as well as spiritual trauma and purity culture recovery. Kailey is an adjunct professor at Ashland University and North Central State College and is a doctoral student in counselor education and supervision at Ohio University. Lastly, Kailey co-owns Refuge Counseling, an LGBTQIA allied counseling practice in Ashland, Ohio. In her free time, Kailey is a voracious reader and has a special fondness for YA novels and romance novels.



**Jared Sparks, LPCC**  
*Intera Counseling and Wellness, LLC*  
[Jared.sparks1010@gmail.com](mailto:Jared.sparks1010@gmail.com)

Jared earned his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Kent State University where he also minored in Human Development and Family Studies. He then went on to complete his Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Walsh University. Jared is a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC). Jared has been practicing as a counselor in the Northeast Ohio area since 2019. He has experience working with children, adolescents, and adults, and specializes in the following areas: trauma, adolescence issues, depression, anxiety, and LGBTQ+ issues. Jared is an LGBTQ+ affirming counselor and strives to create an environment that is safe and free of judgment for all his clients. He is currently certified in EMDR and is completing his certification in TF-CBT as well.

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Elena Aslanides-Kandis, LPCC-S  
*Stark County Mental Health & Addiction Recovery*  
[Elena.kandis@starkmhar.org](mailto:Elena.kandis@starkmhar.org)

Elena M. Aslanides-Kandis Suicide & Community Response Coordinator Stark County Mental Health & Addiction Recovery  
Elena is the Suicide & Community Response Coordinator at Stark County Mental Health & Addiction Recovery (StarkMHAR) and serves as the Chair of the Stark County Suicide Prevention Coalition. Elena has a bachelor's degree in psychology and Master of Education in community counseling.

As a Licensed Professional Clinical Supervising Counselor (LPCC-S), Elena began working in Summit County as an outpatient therapist specializing in the areas of trauma and early childhood. Elena held various positions in her 11 years at the Summit County based agency, with her last role serving as the Clinical Manager and Senior Clinical Consultant for School Based Programs. Elena also was part of a team responsible for implementing Zero Suicide, a framework for health and behavioral health systems to provide safer suicide care, which led to her interest in macro-level system change work. In 2018, during the youth suicide cluster in Stark County, Elena was called to work in the community where she is raising her family and joined StarkMHAR in the newly created position of Suicide and Community Response Coordinator. The focus of her work is suicide prevention which addresses the entire continuum from prevention, intervention, and postvention. She enjoys working in partnership with others in the community to reduce suicide in Stark County and support those that have been impacted by suicide loss. Elena resides in Canton, Ohio with her husband, Greg, and their two full spirited children, Eva, and Niko.



**Melissa Wolfe, MA**  
*North Canton City Schools*  
[wolfefamily98@att.net](mailto:wolfefamily98@att.net)

Melissa Wolfe is currently an Intervention Specialist with North Canton City Schools. She has worked in the field of mental health for Inpatient and Outpatient agencies as well as faith-based agencies. At these agencies she specialized in work with children and youth. She also has experience as a Preschool Director and Independent Provider for the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. Personally, Melissa is a suicide loss survivor and believes it is vital to assist young survivors through the trauma of this specific type of loss. Adults need to provide young survivors with hope and healing.



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Kristi Horner, FPS

*Founder and Executive Director of Courage To Caregivers*  
[kristi@couragetocaregivers.org](mailto:kristi@couragetocaregivers.org)

Kristi Horner is the Founder and Executive Director for Courage to Caregivers. Kristi graduated from Denison University with a BA in Economics. She is a certified (through OhioMHAS) Family Peer Support Specialist and NAMI Ohio Trainer for this program. Throughout her career she has worked for a variety of nonprofits as Director of Special Events, Director of Volunteers and Director of Admissions. In 2014, she lost her brother to suicide. She had been one of her brother's mental illness long-distance caregivers for four years. He lived with depression, anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder. As someone who supported someone she loved very much, living with mental illness, she knew

there had to be a better way to support mental illness caregivers and the idea for Courage to Caregivers was born!



Jenny Woodworth, LISW

*Courage to Caregivers*  
[Jenny@CourageToCaregivers.org](mailto:Jenny@CourageToCaregivers.org)

Jenny Woodworth, LISW, serves as Director of Programs and Group Coaching Leader for Courage to Caregivers. Jenny graduated from West Virginia University with a bachelor's degree in social work and a Master's degree in Social Work from Cleveland State University. She has a rich variety of experiences across populations and settings and is passionate about supporting mental health and wellness in families, individuals and especially caregivers. Jenny strives to bring

compassion, a sense of humor and hope in all her interactions.

