

2024



OKLAHOMA FATHERHOOD SUMMIT

• **The Merit of a Father** •
Thursday, March 14, 2024



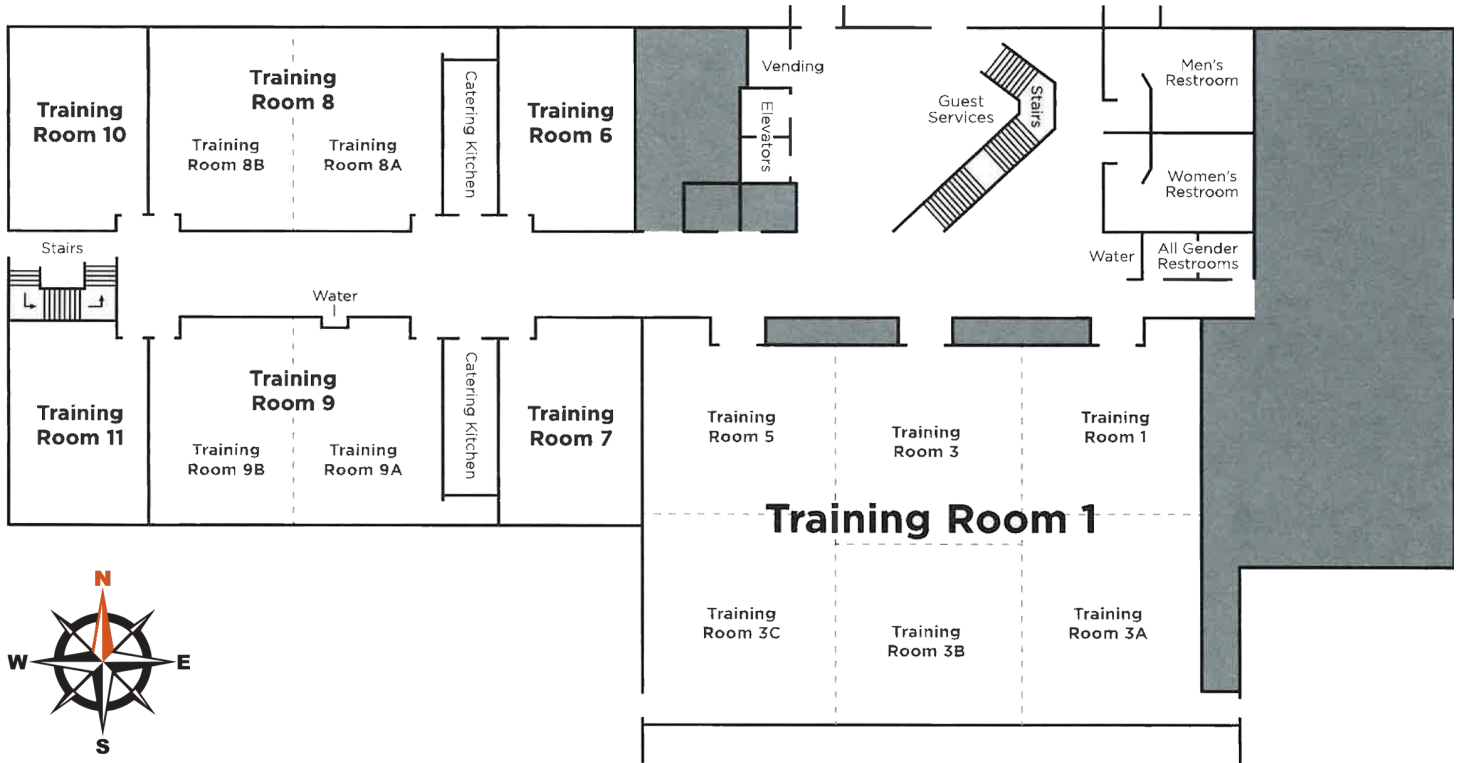
Oklahoma Children
of Incarcerated Parents
Advisory Committee



THE PARENT
CHILD CENTER
TULSA



MAP: TULSA TECH FIRST FLOOR TRAINING ROOMS



EVALUATION



The 2024 Oklahoma Fatherhood Summit Planning Committee and partners are proud to present the Oklahoma Fatherhood Summit on March 14, 2024, at Tulsa Tech - Lemley Memorial Campus. The committee is working with the Educational Training, Evaluation, Assessment, and Measurement (E-TEAM) Department of the University of Oklahoma to evaluate stakeholder engagement and capacity-building efforts. Your feedback is essential to continually improving the programs and services offered by OCCY and its partners. Your responses will be anonymous and aggregated with other respondents' responses. Thank you for your time!

In your web browser, navigate to the following link or scan the QR code to access the survey.

https://ousurvey.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_50cEt8O0TqHGncO

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RECOGNIZE • HONOR • CELEBRATE • FATHERS & FATHER FIGURES

Summit Goals:

1. Increase awareness of community resources and programs to help fathers meet the social, emotional, and financial needs of their children and families.
2. Increase engagement between fathers and their children and families.
3. Increase positive engagement of service providers in their efforts to provide equitable services for fathers, children and families.
4. Build community partnerships and momentum around amplifying voices of fathers.

Fathers and father-figures play an important role in the lives of children.

• Special Thanks to Our Sponsors •



AGENDA-AT-A-GLANCE

9 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Welcome & Opening Comments

9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Featured Presenter – Coach Sherman Smith

10:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

Break & Visit Resource Booths

10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Breakout Sessions

11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Lunch & Featured Presenter – Candice Crear

1:15 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Break & Visit Resource Booths

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Breakout Sessions

2:30 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Break & Visit Resource Booths

2:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Parent Café

3:45 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Closing Comments

EXHIBITORS

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Oklahoma

Birthright Living Legacy, Inc.

Girl Scouts of Eastern Oklahoma

J.A.M.E.S. Inc.

Lilyfield Empower Tulsa

Mental Health Association of Oklahoma

Modus

North Tulsa Economic Development Initiative, Inc.

Oklahoma Appleseed Center for Law & Justice

Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth

Oklahoma Family Network

Oklahoma Human Services – Be A Neighbor

ParentPro

Prison Fellowship Ministries

Strong Tomorrows

Supporters of Families with Sickle Cell Disease, Inc.

The Parent Child Center of Tulsa

Tulsa Birth Equity Initiative

Tulsa Tech

• Special Thanks to the Summit Committee and Volunteers •

Marquess Dennis – Chair

Beulah Adijun

Robert Agnew

Alisa Bell

Teresa Berg

James Boykin

Margaret Butler

Jeremy Colbert

Sekou Clincy

James Craig

Crystal Dennis

Danielle Dill

Ellen Hardy

Malayna Hasmanis

Chelsea Hunsucker

Salena King-Coughlan

Flynn Mason

Mark James

Brittany Gassner

Melanie Gartside

LaChez' English

Angela Surratt

Shannon Luper

Caitlin Merritt

Isabel Rodriguez

Lisa White

Matthias Wicks



FEATURED PRESENTER: COACH SHERMAN SMITH

9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
Featured Presentation

Room:
Main Conference Hall
Training Room 1

Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

Presenter: Coach Sherman Smith

Facilitator: Marquess Dennis, Birthright Living Legacy, Inc.

Description: *In this interview, Marquess Dennis and Coach Sherman will discuss the role and impact of the 'extended father' in Coach Sherman's life. Coach Sherman will share the valuable lessons these 'extended fathers' (giants) taught him and how he passed these lessons on to others while in the 'extended father' role. Coach Sherman will also share his personal story about finding out at the age of 63 that he had a 45-year-old son. Coach Sherman states, "If I were to write a book on the experience, I would title it "From Guilt to Grace!" Coach Sherman discovered that he had fathered a child during high school. This led to significant guilt because of the impact his irresponsibility had on the son (DeLand) and the uncertainty of how it would impact his family. Coach Sherman hopes attendees feel encouraged, challenged, warned, and instructed.*

•••

Sherman Smith is a loyal follower of Christ, devoted husband, father, and lifelong athlete. Smith was drafted in the second round of the 1976 N.F.L. Draft by the Seattle Seahawks. Smith led the team in rushing in his first four seasons, eventually amassing 3,520 yards and 28 touchdowns, along with 217 receptions for 2,293 yards and 10 touchdowns. In 1995, Smith joined the staff of the Houston Oilers (now the Tennessee Titans) as the coach for the running backs, where he helped mold Eddie George into one of the league's elite running backs. In 2008, Smith left the Titans to join the Washington Redskins as Offensive Coordinator. Next, Smith was reunited with his former team, the Seattle Seahawks, and was part of the 2013/14 Seattle Seahawks Super Bowl winning team. Smith has three children: DeLand, Shavonne, and Sherman. He has been married to his sweetheart, Sharon, for 46 years.



Coach Sherman Smith



MORNING AGENDA

8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.	Attendee Check In & Visit Resource Booths
9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Room: Main Conference Hall Training Room 1	Summit Welcome & Opening Remarks Marquess Dennis, Executive Director, Birthright Living Legacy, Inc. <i>Chair, 2024 Oklahoma Fatherhood Summit</i> David McLeod, PhD, M.S.W., University of Oklahoma <i>Chair, Oklahoma Children of Incarcerated Parents Advisory Committee</i> Annette Wisk-Jacobi, J.D., Executive Director <i>Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth</i> The Honorable J. Kevin Stitt, Governor <i>State of Oklahoma</i>
9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. <i>Featured Presentation</i> Room: Main Conference Hall Training Room 1	Standing on the Shoulder of Giants <i>Presenter: Coach Sherman Smith</i> <i>Facilitator: Marquess Dennis, Birthright Living Legacy, Inc.</i>
10:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.	Break and Visit Resource Booths
10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.	Breakout Sessions - 1 to 6

• Descriptions of the Breakout Sessions 1-6 Begin on the Next Page •



BREAKOUT SESSIONS 1 to 3

10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Room:
Training Room 7

1. TANF Family Strengthening

Presenter: Flynn Mason, Oklahoma Human Services

Description: *The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) commits to strengthening families as part of its mission to improve the quality of life of its citizens. The department recognizes that strong families are the foundation of healthy communities and aims to provide support, resources, and services to help families thrive. This session will explore the initiatives underway to fulfill this commitment.*

10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Room:
Training Room 8A

2. Essential Power Tools for Every Girldad's Fathering Toolbox

Presenter: Michelle Watson Canfield, PhD, LPC

Description: *The impact of fathering daughters is increasingly cited as a core component for psychological, emotional, social, and moral vitality in women. This workshop will address strategic data points to set a foundation for empowering dads to dial into their daughter's hearts with more intention and consistency. Attendees will learn proactive ways to strengthen the father-daughter bond while gaining practical tools for their fathering toolbox to build their competence and increase confidence to pursue a greater connection with their daughter.*

10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Room:
Training Room 8B

3. Empowering Futures: Unlocking the Power of Parenting

Presenters: Charley Allen-Galicia, Keshunna Carvin, Ayane Watson, Natalie Gerard, J.A.M.E.S. Inc. - Young Parent Advisory Board

Description: *Embark on a transformative journey as you discover the art of self-advocacy, a skill that empowers you and equips you to be the standard bearer for your child's journey. Learn how to navigate the path of advocating for yourself and, in turn, become a powerful advocate for your child. This dual empowerment sets the stage for a future where you and your child thrive. Our commitment to this journey extends beyond words – connect to James, Inc.'s invaluable resources that provide support, guidance, and a network to help you and your child flourish together.*



BREAKOUT SESSIONS 4 to 6

10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
Room:
Training Room 9A

4. Humanizing Family Conflict with Mediation Presenter: Sandra Tolliver, Attorney

Description: *Learn the benefits of using mediation to settle a family law case as an alternative to having the Judge decide the case. Ms. Tolliver brings a fresh approach to court-mandated family law mediation using human-centered problem-solving. Mediation participants can communicate their information directly and confidentially to the mediator. By acknowledging the emotions triggered by the family conflict and the complex legal system, Ms. Tolliver can help the participants work around emotional stumbling blocks that could prevent a satisfactory resolution of the court case. Human first, law second.*

10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
Room:
Training Room 9B

5. Effective Fatherhood for Youth Success Presenter: Tarell Earl, Pursuit of Prosperity Strategies (POPS Program)

Description: *This session is intended of helping parents assist their children with understanding house rules and taking on personal responsibilities. What better way than to give them a proven system that is both written and visual! Home training begins as soon as a child is old enough to crawl and will continue until they leave home. The objective is to have them ready so they will be able to reach their full potential and successfully live out their God-given purpose to the best of their abilities. If you desire your children to be successful in their home-life and thereafter, then this the Home Training Guide for you!*

10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
Room:
Training Room 10

6. Navigating Parenthood with Confidence: Overcoming Imposter Syndrome as a Parent Presenter: Dr. Ryan Johnson, Don't Be Scared

Description: *This interactive workshop is designed for parents who want to overcome the feelings of imposter syndrome in their parenting journey. Dr. Ryan Johnson, founder of Don't Be Scared and a devoted father, shares insights and strategies to help parents identify imposter syndrome, understand how it affects their relationship with their children, and apply effective coping mechanisms. Participants will leave empowered and equipped with tools to enhance their parenting with confidence and resilience.*



FEATURED PRESENTER: CANDICE CREAR

11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.
Featured Presentation
& Box Lunch

Room:
Main Conference Hall
Training Room 1

Bridging the Gap to Fatherhood

Presenter: Candice Crear, *From Fatherless to Fearless*[™]

Facilitator: Shannon Luper, Girl Scouts of Eastern Oklahoma

Description: *Fatherhood. As the emotions of rejection and anger continue to fester, the statistics of poverty, behavioral problems, crime, and drug use become more prevalent. But the truth remains – Fathers have always been needed. In this session, we will explore the challenges and triumphs that define this pivotal role while unraveling the threads that connect fathers to their children. From dispelling societal stereotypes to embracing vulnerability, Candice will share her journey of conquering the road less traveled – healing. She’ll encourage all the attendees to help fathers champion a relationship with their children and beat this epidemic once and for all.*

...



Candice Crear

*Noted as a multi-award-winning international best-selling author, Candice Crear has been the voice of fatherless women worldwide. With her technique, B.R.I.D.G.E.®, she has established a strategic roadmap that helps those with aching pasts and unforgiving hearts to face their circumstances and push through to the other side. As the founder and C.E.O. of the nonprofit organization, *From Fatherless to Fearless*®, Candice has developed workshops, trainings, and books. She is making an impact by serving those whom society has doomed a statistic. Candice hopes to teach fatherless girls how to be true overcomers, live their lives without the imprint of a contaminated baton, and be great parents to the next generation. For more information about *From Fatherless to Fearless*, please visit www.fromfatherlesstofearless.org*



AFTERNOON AGENDA

11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Featured Presentation

Bridging the Gap to Fatherhood

Presenter: Candice Crear, From Fatherless to Fearless™

Facilitator: Shannon Luper, Girl Scouts of Eastern Oklahoma

Room:

Main Conference Hall

Training Room 1

1:15 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Break and Visit Resource Booths

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Breakout Sessions - 7 to 12

2:30 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Break and Visit Resource Booths

2:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Be Strong Families™ Parent Café

3:45 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Closing Comments

Room:

Main Conference Hall

Training Room 1

Marquess Dennis, Executive Director, Birthright Living Legacy, Inc.

Chair, 2024 Oklahoma Fatherhood Summit

• **Breakout Sessions 7-12 Begin on the Next Page** •



BREAKOUT SESSIONS 7 to 9

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Room:
Training Room 7

7. Empowering Fathers and Father Figures in their Caregiving Role
Presenters: Salena King-Coughlan & Jordan Shuler, Oklahoma State University

Description: *This interactive session will blend discussions, fun activities, and real-world scenarios with academic research to deepen your understanding and celebration of fatherhood. This session is perfect for anyone interested in the positive impact of fathers on nurturing and supporting families. Come along for an engaging experience on empowering fathers in their crucial caregiving roles!*

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Room:
Training Room 8A

8. Against All Odds: A Struggling Dad's Guide to Leaving a Legacy
Presenter: Tyson Thompson, Tyson Family Inc.

Description: *Learn how any father can positively impact their children's lives, even after making mistakes or facing financial hardship. This program offers practical strategies and actionable advice to help fathers leave a powerful legacy filled with love, values, and life lessons. During this program, you'll discover how to 1) restore trust, 2) co-parent like a pro, and 3) recover from past mistakes. Let's make a lasting impression on our children and make a difference in their lives.*

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Room:
Training Room 8B

9. The Fathers Haven: Building Stronger Bonds and Creating Generational Legacy
Presenter: Kelly R. Little, The Urban Institute for Strengthening Families

Description: *Join Kelly R. Little of Fatherhood University³⁶⁵ and the Fathers Haven in a holistically enlightening and empowering fatherhood training workshop that delves deep into the critical importance of reducing childhood trauma and understanding the role of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. The workshop's primary focus will be nurturing a greater awareness of a father's presence, absence, and impact on children's lives. In addition, the workshop will shed light on the benefits of understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and how they shape the lives of our little ones when we don't expose them to DICE. DICE will be explained and explored in detail through the workshop.*

During the training, participants will gain invaluable insights into navigating



BREAKOUT SESSION 10

Social Services and the often-challenging Child Support System. This exploration will be approached from a healing-centered engagement perspective, aiming to equip fathers with the knowledge and tools to effectively access these resources while advocating for their children's well-being.

Furthermore, attendees will receive practical strategies that foster effective partnerships with stakeholders in various areas of a child's life. These strategies will facilitate collaborative efforts to provide stability, guidance, and support – all in line with the core principles of fatherhood. Also, the workshop will emphasize the significance of self-care practices that normalize healing and prioritize emotional intelligence. Fathers and caretakers will discover the power of nurturing their well-being while serving as positive role models for their children.

By the end of this impactful fatherhood training workshop, participants will leave with an increased understanding of trauma reduction, the physiological basis of stress response, and the importance of a father's presence in their child's life. They will possess the knowledge and tools to advocate for themselves and actively engage with social services and child support while maintaining a healing-centered approach. Most importantly, fathers will be equipped with practical strategies to promote emotional intelligence and normalize self-care practices.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. Gain insight into the role of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems in the context of childhood trauma.*
- 2. Understand the impact of the father's absence on children's social, emotional, and cognitive development.*
- 3. Explore Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and their significance in understanding and addressing childhood trauma.*
- 4. Acquire practical strategies to navigate social services and the Child Support System while upholding a healing-centered approach.*
- 5. Develop effective partnership strategies with stakeholders to support children's stability and well-being.*
- 6. Understand the importance of emotional intelligence in fatherhood and explore strategies to cultivate it.*

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Room:

Training Room 9A

10. Identifying Child Abuse and Neglect

Presenter: Katie Drilling, Child Advocacy Network

Description: *This hour-long session will review the types of abuse and neglect and how to identify them. This session will also discuss what to do and what not to do if a child discloses abuse or neglect, as well as the proper reporting steps, as everyone in the state of Oklahoma is considered a mandated reporter by law.*



BREAKOUT SESSIONS 11 & 12

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Room:
Training Room 9B

11. Empowering Fathers: A Guide to Supporting Your Partner During Childbirth
Presenter: Shamika J. Antwine Boone, Tulsa Birth Equity Initiative

Description: *Empowering Fathers: A Guide to Supporting Your Partner During Childbirth provides practical advice, emotional insights, and valuable tips for active participation in the childbirth process. Covering communication, relaxation techniques, and understanding the birthing environment, this guide equips fathers with the knowledge and confidence to play a crucial role in fostering a positive atmosphere for both partners.*

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Room:
Training Room 10

12. Introducing Skillz on Wheelz / SOWing into Fathers
Presenters: Leon Skillens & Michael McCalister,
LPC-S, Skillz On Wheelz

Description: *Two clinicians from Skillz On Wheelz will present information on the importance of mental health needs and associated services for fathers. There will be a PowerPoint presentation that provides information about Skillz On Wheelz, including its origin, vision, mission, and contact information, as well as a description of its SOWing Into Fathers program, which links fathers with various resources in the community through care management and partnerships with local organizations. Event participants will also be able to view the mobile mental health unit and tour the R.V. in the parking lot.*

BE STRONG FAMILIES™ PARENT CAFÉ

2:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Room:
Main Conference Hall
Training Room 1

Parenting is a Garden, Dig it! Cultivating Families with Parent Cafés
Facilitators: Marquess Dennis, Birthright Living Legacy, Inc.
Caitlin Merritt, Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth

Description: *Join the ultimate bash as we get ready to groove through the parenting journey. But you don't have to do it alone! Join us at the Be Strong Families™ Parent Café, where we embrace the Joe Dirt philosophy - "Parenting is a garden, dig it!" Rooted in Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors, the café model fosters strong and healthy families through peer-to-peer support. Our Parent Café is like no other. Experience the fast-paced, engaging conversations that will leave you feeling supported, refreshed, and ready to plant seeds of change in your community and family. It's a parenting party. Can you dig it?"*



ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS



Annette Wisk Jacobi, J.D.

Annette Wisk Jacobi has dedicated her career to improving the lives of Oklahoma's children and families. Since December 2017, she has been the executive director of the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth (OCCY). Before working with OCCY, she spent over 20 years in public health and child abuse prevention; before that, she worked for the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy. After receiving her Juris Doctorate from the University of Oklahoma, College of Law, and certification from the University of Oklahoma Center on Child Abuse and Neglect's Interdisciplinary Training Program, she started this line of work. Before law school, she received her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology with a minor in Family Relations/Child Development from Oklahoma State University.

Outside of her day-to-day role with OCCY, Ms. Jacobi serves as a member of the federal Quality Improvement Center for Domestic Violence and Child Welfare National Advisory Committee, as Board Treasurer for the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds, as a Master in the William J. Holloway Inn of Court, and Chairperson of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board. She has received the Empowering Adults-Protecting Children Government in Action Award, the Oklahoma Bar Association Trailblazer Award, the Oklahoma Lawyers for Children Buddy Faye Foster Service Award, and the Exceptional Merit Award presented by the Oklahoma Public Health Association.



Caitlin Merritt

Caitlin Merritt is the community planner for the Preschool Development Grant. Working closely with other stakeholders, she facilitates community capacity building by encouraging family voices to be heard and valued throughout strategic planning and implementation processes to improve early childhood education and outcomes. Before coming to OCCY, Caitlin was a public educator for four years at the elementary level. As an educator, she focused on equitable reading instruction. She utilized parent partnerships to empower the next generation of Oklahomans with the necessary knowledge and tools to create generational change. She is passionate about collaborating and coordinating efforts to serve Oklahoma's children through a family-centered approach. She holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Cameron University in Lawton, Oklahoma, and is a first-generation high school and college graduate. Her passion for serving single-parent households and neurodivergent families stems from her lived experience and belief that knowledge is transformative.



ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS



David McLeod, PhD, MSW

David McLeod has spent the past three decades working to actively reduce violence, particularly that directed at people and communities with diminished capacities for self-protection. In addition to being a Professor and the Interim Director of the AHZSSW, he holds affiliate faculty status with the O.U. Department of Women's and Gender Studies, the O.U. Center for Social Justice, the O.U. Carceral Consortium, the O.U. Institute for Community and Society Transformation, and the Ruth Knee Institute for Transformative Scholarship. David is highly involved in the community and is the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Forensic Social Work (www.JoFSW.org), the Co-Editor of the Handbook of Forensic Social Work ([available here](#)), and the President-Elect of the National Organization of Forensic Social Work (www.NOFSW.org). For more on his background and work, visit www.damcleod.com.



Flynn Mason

Flynn Mason obtained a bachelor's degree in Hotel & Restaurant Administration from Oklahoma State University, laying the groundwork for his career. He dedicated over seven years as a Hotel Manager before transitioning to Oklahoma Human Services in 2009 as a Social Service Specialist, discovering his passion within the TANF unit. His commitment led to his role as a Career Development Specialist in 2015. He was recognized nationally and presented at the National TANF State Directors Summit in 2019. Flynn advanced to Program Field Representative in 2022 and became Program Manager for the TANF Family Unit in July 2023. Alongside his wife, Stacey, and children Jaycee, Johnathan, and Gavin, Flynn cherishes family roles, actively engaging in his children's activities and celebrating the arrival of their grandchild Kashton in November, expanding their familial joy.



ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS



Governor J. Kevin Stitt

Governor Kevin Stitt is leading Oklahoma with a vision to become one of the top ten in job growth, infrastructure, education, and more.

He is an entrepreneur who founded Gateway in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 2000. Starting with only \$1,000 and a computer, he grew Gateway into a nationwide mortgage company operating in 42 states and servicing more than \$20 billion in residential mortgages. In 2018, he led Gateway through a merger and established Gateway First Bank, which today is one of Oklahoma's 10 largest banks by assets, with over \$2 billion in assets, 166 mortgage centers across the U.S., and more than 1,600 employees.

In record numbers, Oklahomans said they wanted Stitt to use his business acumen to transform the state. In 2018, he received more votes than any gubernatorial candidate in state history in his first bid for elected office. Governor Stitt has taken a groundbreaking approach to his administration by appointing the most female cabinet secretaries in state history and tapping expert advisors from the private sector, including the first chief operating officer in state history.

He is committed to delivering taxpayers more for their money, and his fiscally conservative leadership helped the state build its largest savings account in history, which proved to be prophetic in the face of an oil and gas downturn. Stitt is a fourth-generation Oklahoman and a graduate of Oklahoma State University. He and his wife, Sarah, have been married for 25 years and have six children.



ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS



J.A.M.E.S. Inc.

J.A.M.E.S. Inc. was founded in 2007 to lead expecting and parenting adolescent families to self-sufficiency and is a leading voice in the adolescent parenting space. Since its inception, the organization has served hundreds of families in the Tulsa area through scholarships, life coaching, case management, and professional program services. The Young Parent Advisory Board (YPAB) was established in 2018 and is a leadership training cohort. YPAB members come together to share the future of our organization while developing transferable skills for their future. As the client's voice, YPAB is committed to helping young parents become self-sufficient.



Jordan Shuler

Jordan Shuler received his master's in Marriage and Family Therapy from Oklahoma State University, where he completed two internships involving treating individuals, couples, and families experiencing various mental health and relational challenges. Jordan is a Ph.D. student and graduate research associate at Oklahoma State University. Jordan's research and outreach experiences include developing and assisting in producing and disseminating extension education resources on farm stress management, suicide prevention, mindfulness, and developing psychological flexibility. Jordan's research focuses include adaptive romantic couple functioning and maintenance, pornography's influence on couple relationships, and fostering adaptive co-parenting dynamics.



Katie Drilling

Katie Drilling graduated from the University of Texas with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Katie worked for the Department of Human Services for five years as a Child Abuse Investigator in Tulsa County. She continued her career with the D.H.S. as a Child Safety Meeting Facilitator for two years. Katie has been with the Child Advocacy Network for two and a half years as the Manager of Multidisciplinary Services.



ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS



Kelly R. Little

Kelly R. Little, a retired combat veteran with over 24 years of honorable service to the country, is an accomplished author, poet, visionary, and leader. As a former Customer Relations Manager for Mecklenburg County Government, he has dedicated his post-military career to addressing inequity, exploitation, and disenfranchisement, particularly within black families.

Little actively collaborates with organizations such as Global Partners for Fathers and Families, Equus Workforce Solutions, and Mecklenburg County Child Support Services. Through the Empowering Fathers Program, he assists fathers in obtaining career employment while providing emotional and parenting support. His impactful Rites of Passage program focuses on the comprehensive growth of young individuals through emotional wellness, social development, mental mastery, and exposure to social capital assets.

Noteworthy achievements include reshaping the health and human services delivery paradigm in North Carolina, influencing nationwide Child Support programs to embrace fatherhood, and successfully navigating skepticism within the community. Little's extensive credentials include being a Certified Professional Mindfulness and Meditation Teacher, a Leadership, Life, and Executive Certified Professional Coach, and an Energy Leadership Index-Master Practitioner.

He is a 2015 graduate of NCSEA U, a 2016 Practitioner Leadership Institute Fellowship graduate, and a proud 2019 Leadership Charlotte Class 41 Alumnus. Recognized as the 2018 Child Support Employee of the Year, Little also holds certifications as a 24/7 Dad Fatherhood Facilitator, Workforce Development Soft Skills Trainer (Connections to Success), and Father Engagement Practitioner (National Fatherhood Initiative). His educational background includes an undergraduate degree from UNC-Charlotte and dual graduate degrees – an M.B.A. and a Master of Science and Leadership from Pfeiffer University, where he was admitted to the National Scholars Honor Society.



ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS



Leon Skillens

Known to most as “Coach Skillz,” Leon Skillens III was born and raised in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and is married to Ebony Skillens; and has three exceptional children and three grandchildren! Leon has ten years of experience as a Certified Case Manager II specializing in skill building and psychoeducation. Leon holds a master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling at Langston University and is working towards becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor.



Marquess Dennis

Marquess Dennis is a husband, the father of four children, and an active member of the Tulsa community. Marquess is the founder and Executive Director of Birthright Living Legacy, Inc. whose mission is to validate the position of the father within the family unit and bring fathers and their children closer together by providing programs to foster improved communication and connectivity.



Michael McCalister

Michael McCalister currently works as Clinical Director and a therapist on Skillz On Wheelz. Attended BTW High School and the University of Oklahoma, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology/Criminology and a Communications minor. He later earned his Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling from Langston University. Michael has worked in the mental health/behavioral health field for over ten years, starting as a case manager and linking and referring low-income clients with community resources. Michael is a proud Tulsan and enjoys serving the community that helped shape and mold him into who he is today. Michael has experience working with diverse populations and varying age groups, from children to adults. He also believes that fathers are often an overlooked population regarding receiving mental health services, financial/housing services, and fatherhood support services in general. Therefore, Skillz on Wheelz is a great opportunity to partner with other organizations and programs to help bridge the gap for fatherhood needs and provisions.



ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS



Michelle Watson Canfield, PhD, LPC

Michelle Watson Canfield, PhD, LPC, is a national speaker, author, professional counselor of 28 years, former adjunct graduate school faculty, and founder of The Abba Project, a nine-month group forum for dads whose daughters are in their teens and 20's. She writes guest articles regularly for journals and magazines (online and print), as well as her own bi-monthly Dad-Daughter Friday Blog and has been interviewed on numerous radio and television programs. Her best-selling book, Dad, Here's What I Really Need From You: A Guide for Connecting With Your Daughter's Heart is followed by her most recent field guide for men, Let's Talk: Conversation Starters for Dads and Daughters (now available also in Spanish). She has also written contributing chapters in Fathers Say and How to Disciple Men. Dr. Michelle hosts the award-winning The Dad Whisperer Podcast, which is available on her website and Apple + Google Podcasts, and Spotify. She also co-chairs the Father-Daughter Initiative at the National Center for Fathering with her husband, Dr. Ken Canfield. They reside in Fayetteville, Arkansas near their tribe of 27, which includes five children, three son-in-law's, two daughters-in-law, and 16 grandkids.



Dr. Ryan Johnson

Dr. Ryan Johnson, the visionary behind Don't Be Scared, is an esteemed expert committed to empowering individuals in overcoming imposter syndrome and fostering resilience. As the creator of innovative programs that blend science with self-improvement, Dr. Johnson's work is pivotal in encouraging exploration and growth. A dedicated father to two beautiful daughters, he embodies the role of guiding children in the pursuit of knowledge and curiosity.



ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS



Salena King-Coughlan

Salena King-Coughlan, based in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is a PhD candidate in Human Development and Family Science, with a focus on Infant Mental Health. Her academic progression includes a thesis on parenting during the pandemic and a qualitative dissertation aimed at empowering father figures in caregiving. Salena's career ambition lies in translational science, bridging the gap between scholarly research and practical implementation in various aspects of family dynamics, child well-being, and child development. Her background as a former child welfare specialist at OKDHS enriches this pursuit, reflecting a commitment to impactful, applied research in the broader field of family studies.



Sandra Tolliver

Sandra Tolliver is a Tulsa native, practicing attorney, local entrepreneur, and innovative mediator. She takes a client-centered approach when representing her clients in divorce, paternity, custody, child support and other family law matters. She values mediation as a settlement tool and became a mediator herself in 2008. The court system does not address the human aspect of a divorce or a custody battle or the emotions triggered by family conflict. As an entrepreneur, Ms. Tolliver is developing a new family law mediation model focused on the human participants first and the law second.



Shamika Boone

Shamika J. A. Boone is a Tulsa native and has served families for over 20 years, in related fields ranging from Birth doula support, Education with Tulsa Public Schools, Child Welfare with the Department of Humans Services and serving on a Board for supporting foster children. As Program Project Manager with TBEI she supervises the full-time doula team, assists with formulating, organizing, and implementing some of the internal projects for the TBEI Doula Program. Shamika is a proud alum of Langston University. She's also certified as a TBEI Community-Based Doula, DONA Birth Doula, and Childbirth Educator. Shamika is passionate about laboring parents in the community being seen, heard, and controlling their own birth experience.



ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS



Shannon Luper

Shannon Luper is the Manager of the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program at Girl Scouts of Eastern Oklahoma. Educated at Rogers State University, Career Point Business School, and NE Oklahoma Vo-tech, Shannon began her career in law before transitioning to aviation. In the 1990s, she started volunteering in prison ministry, developing a passion for children of incarcerated parents. This led her to join Project MEND, where she has dedicated over 20 years. Shannon received the Sarkeys Special Recognition Award in 2017 from the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofit for her work with Girl Scouts Beyond Bars. She actively collaborates with organizations advocating for these children and facilitates cognitive-based programs for inmates. Currently pursuing ministerial credentials at the I Am Victorious School of Ministries, Shannon is deeply committed to her mission.



Tarell Earl

Tarell Earl is a Youth Empowerment Speaker, Mentor Specialist, Mental Health Specialist, and Certified Christian Counselor, who trains, develops, and connects teens to their career goals, through the POPS Program. In addition to running a successful mentoring program, he is a lead Mental Health Specialist that works with teens with mental issues through treatment groups, presentations, workshops, and counseling. In 2022, Tarell was recognized by Modern Woodman with the Hometown Hero's Award.



Tyson D. Thompson

Tyson D. Thompson has worked as an educator, businessman, and community advocate for over three decades. As an author, speaker, and performance improvement specialist, Tyson helps individuals recover from trauma and improve their interpersonal skills to build healthier connections and reach high-performance levels. Tyson D. Thompson has been unwavering in his commitment to education, business, and community advocacy for three decades. As an accomplished author, renowned speaker, and expert in performance improvement, he empowers individuals to conquer personal challenges and elevate their collaboration ability, thus cultivating stronger and more productive partnerships.





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How to film your Storyvine video



Step 1: Sign Up on Storyvine

- Scan the provided QR code or use the link:
oklahoma.gov/occy/storyvine/fatherhood
- Follow the prompts to create your account.

Step 2: Download the Storyvine App



- Search and download the Storyvine app from your app store.

Step 3: Access "The Merit of a Father" Project

- Enter Your Email.
- Select "The Merit of a Father."

Step 4: Adjust Permissions

- Click "ALLOW" and then select "OK" to grant Storyvine necessary permissions.

Step 5: Film Your Video

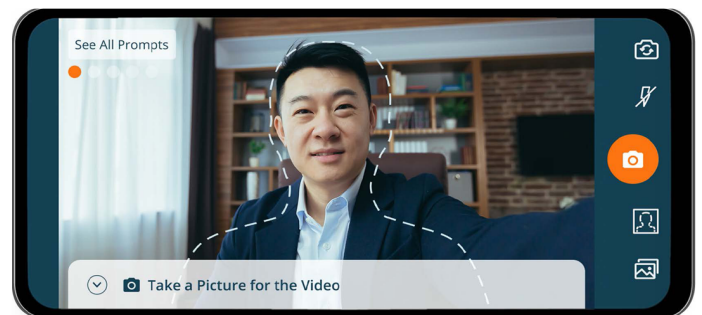
- Storyvine will guide you through prompts related to "The Merit of a Father."

Step 6: Upload Your Video

- Click the "VIDEOS" tab at any time to check your upload history and status.
- Keep the application open until the upload is complete.

Understand the Storyvine Interface

- Use the orange dashed outline as a guide for your position in the frame.
- Tap the subject's face to focus, and switch to SELFIE mode if needed.
- Use the CAMERA to take a picture.
- Manage flash, dotted outline, and load photo/video from the CAMERA ROLL as necessary.
- Review prompts, display coaching, and start/stop recording with the VIDEO CAMERA.



- Avoid obstructed areas and use REPLAY, TRIM CLIP, REDO, and CONTINUE options accordingly.





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