

Behavioral Health Crisis Response in Rural and Agricultural Communities

Panelist Biographies

Rob Bates, Bates Counseling Services

(from Rob's website, <https://www.batescounselingservices.com/>) I bring a diverse skill set of life and counseling experience. I grew up with a tumultuous household in a small community. I joined the military at a young age and have lived and worked throughout the world. I have had my own family, raising children weathering many successes and failures in the process. I continue to experience counseling as a client working with the emotions of my past and present to improve my future. My personal experience in therapy enhances my great respect for my clients' vulnerability in our sessions. I am a fellow traveler in life, as you learn and grow so do I.

I have returned to a quiet rural community because I love the pace, the people, and watching the cycle of life in the fields that grow around me. My daily life is filled with my amazing wife, my elderly dog, and villainous kitten in a farmhouse from the 50's about a mile out of a small town located centrally in Washington. I am close enough to experience the amazing delights of the city; far enough to be separated from the stress and anxiety urban life brings for me. My hobbies include the outdoors, learning, great food, and time with friends. When not working with clients I spend most of my life dreaming of the next great adventure to experience.

I look forward to our journey together and am excited to help you work through whatever comes next for you in this amazingly complicated thing we call life.

Cassidy Brewin, Suicide and Opioid Prevention Coordinator, Walla Walla County Department of Community Health

Cassidy Brewin (she/her) is the Suicide and Opioid Coordinator for Walla Walla County Department of Community Health. She has a Master's in Public Health from University of Washington and Bachelor of Arts from Whitman College and is passionate about creating systems level change to improve the lives of individuals and communities across Washington.

Representative Tom Dent

Tom Dent has been a Columbia Basin resident for over 60 years. He became a professional pilot in 1976, and soon after founded Tom Dent Aviation, which offered aerial application, pilot service and flight instruction for area agriculture and industry. Tom lives on the Flying T Ranch with his family, located 7 miles NE of Moses Lake, raising bison, and producing hay.

Sworn into office in 2015, Tom represents the 13th District, which includes Kittitas County, as well as parts of Grant and Yakima counties. He currently serves as the Ranking member on the Ag and Natural Resources Committee, he also serves on the Human Services, Youth and Early Learning and Transportation Committees as well as several special legislative committees. Tom is the Co-chair for both the Aviation caucus and the Wildfire caucus.

His legislative priorities include wildfire prevention through improving forest health, and increasing our initial attack resources for fire suppression, Agriculture issues including promoting increased trade, protecting pesticide use and water resource management, and as a career aviation professional the protection and expansion of our aviation infrastructure and increased aviation workforce training.

Tom cares deeply about providing a safe and positive environment for young people that allows them to grow up and have the same opportunities available to prior generations to become successful.

Finally, Tom is a passionate advocate for mental health and suicide prevention that improve the lives of the mentally ill and assist families in helping their loved ones.

Dr. Cornelia Kirchhoff, Washington State University

Cornelia Kirchhoff is a clinical track faculty member at Washington State University (WSU) Psychology Department and associate director of the WSU Psychology Clinic. After earning her degree in Psychology from the University of Heidelberg in Germany and working eight years as a clinician with adults and children, she moved to the U.S. in 2009. She earned her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at WSU in 2015. She partnered with WSU Skagit County Farm Response in the hopes of being able to serve the agricultural community in providing therapeutic services and train the next generation of mental health providers in working effectively with this community.

Don McMoran, Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Educator and WSU Skagit County Extension Director

Don McMoran was born on a 2000-acre diversified potato farm in Mount Vernon Washington. He grew up working on the farm including bucking hay bales and moving irrigation pipe all summer long. Working in the fields was long and hard but he grew to appreciate how hard area farmers work to make the valley what it is today. Don completed his Master's Degree in General Agriculture in 1998 with a minor in Spanish and a Masters in Arts and teaching in 2000. After graduating from college Don taught Spanish at Stanwood Middle School for one year before receiving a position with the Skagit Conservation District where he implemented the Conservation Enhancement Reserve Program (CREP). In May of 2006 Don was hired as the WSU Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator for Skagit County, where he assists local farmers and gardeners with their research and extension needs. His major programming includes Cropping and Irrigation Systems, Leadership, Farm Stress, Agricultural Suicide Prevention and Outreach to Underserved Audiences.

Representative Joe Schmick

Rep. Joe Schmick has served the 9th District, which includes Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, Franklin, Lincoln, Adams, Whitman, and south Spokane counties, since 2007.

Joe is a former second-generation farmer and small-business owner. He earned degrees in Accounting and Economics from EWU and is a graduate of the Washington Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation.

Joe's extensive background in agriculture includes leadership roles in local, state and national Farm Bureau organizations, Grain Quality Committee, Washington Barley Commission, and the National Barley Improvement Committee. He served as a member of the Whitman County Wetlands and Whitman County Natural Resource Advisory committees.

Schmick serves on the House Appropriations Committee and the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. He is the Ranking Member on the House Health Care and Wellness Committee, where he has focused his efforts on keeping quality health care affordable, accountable and accessible to all, especially those in underserved rural areas.

Joe and his wife, Kim, reside in Colfax.

Levi Van Dyke, Chief Behavioral Health Officer at Volunteers of America Western Washington (VOAWW)

Levi Van Dyke has spent the past 15 years working in crisis services and suicide prevention throughout the state of Washington. VOAWW operates a crisis center providing 988, Regional Crisis Line (RCL), and Indigenous specific (Native and Strong Lifeline) services across Washington. VOAWW is also currently a national backup chat/text center and LGBTQI+ Youth subnetwork chat/text center through Vibrant Emotional Health, the national 988 administrator.

Outside of VOAWW, Levi currently serves as Board Vice President for the National Association of Crisis Organization Directors. He also serves on numerous regional, state, and national committees, including being a Crisis Response Improvement Strategy Committee (CRIS) member. Levi was raised on the Palouse and spent six years as a volunteer firefighter/EMT while attending Washington State and Eastern Washington Universities.