



PolicyTalk

October 2017

National Science Foundation Grant Awarded

Center staff working with University faculty on project focusing on jurors' use of scientific information

The Public Policy Center is providing assistance to University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty, [Dr. Sarah Gervais](#), on a recently awarded National Science Foundation grant. [This multidisciplinary, multi-method research project will address fundamental questions about how humans reason with and make inferences and decisions based on the quality of relevant scientific data.](#) The project has broad and highly positive societal impact with the potential to improve the way courts use science to inform laypeople's decisions.

Center Director Presenting for Webinar Series

Dr. Mario Scalora will present on forensic issues and civil commitment

[Join the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska for a webinar presented by Public Policy Center Director, Dr. Mario Scalora.](#) The webinar includes

two presentations: one on November 9th at 12pm focusing on forensic issues. Participants will be able to describe areas of overlap between behavioral health and legal systems, define the different areas of forensic behavioral health, and leave with strategies for avoiding problematic engagement when clientele are involved in



Dr. Mario Scalora

legal situations. The second webinar is also on November 9th, at 1pm. This session will cover civil commitment. Participants attending this session will be able to articulate the legal standard for civil commitment in Nebraska, describe the pros and cons of using protective custody, and detail a risk assessment strategy necessary to facilitate a civil commitment when appropriate.

These sessions are appropriate for behavioral health trainees, behavioral health providers, and faculty. [Registration is required.](#)

Nebraska Disaster Behavioral Health Plan

Nebraska state plan recently featured in national publication

The Nebraska State Disaster Behavioral Health Plan was [featured in a newsletter](#) sent out by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Public Health Emergency. Public Policy Center staff work side-by-side with state officials to craft our state plan.



Included in the newsletter was a great summary of the state plan. "Nebraska's Behavioral Health All-Hazards Disaster Response and Recovery Plan provides a framework for organizing the behavioral health response to disasters to include: addressing mental health and substance abuse issues, mitigating the severity of adverse psychological reactions and restoring social and psychological functioning for individuals, families, and communities."

Center Researcher Invited to Speak at International Conference

Dr. Kate Speck presented on Motivational Interviewing in Ireland

Senior Research Manager, [Dr. Kate Speck](#), was recently invited to present at an [international conference in Malahide, Ireland](#). As an expert in Motivational Interviewing, Dr. Speck participated in the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT) Training of New Trainers event, as well as presented at the organization's annual [MINT Forum](#). Her topic for this year's conference was "Family Mediation and



Dr. Kate Speck

Motivational Interviewing: An Exploration of Neutrality and Behavior Change." There were over 350 participants in attendance, representing Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Scotland, Turkey, Germany, Poland, Canada, United Kingdom, Hong Kong, and the United States. Dr. Speck is also a participant in the MINT model of mentorship and will mentor one of the new trainers for 12 months.

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