



# Symposium Conference Speakers Biographies

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2. **Kelly Colopy**, Director, Salt Lake County Human Services
3. **Sherri Wittwer**, MPA, Chair, Utah Coalition for Severe Mental Illness, Member Utah Shattering Silence Coalition
4. **Therese Cavlovic**, PhD, Professor of Economics, Weber State University; Member Utah Shattering Silence Coalition
5. **Dr. Noel Gardner**, MD, Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry
6. **Judge (Ret.) Steven Leifman**, Retired Judge, 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit of Florida; President, The Leifman Group
7. **Judy Hall**, MS, School Psychology, MSW, Member; Utah Shattering Silence Coalition
8. **Dr. Doug Gray**, MD, Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry and Child Psychiatry at the University of Utah, Member of Utah Coalition for Severe Mental Illness
9. **Todd Soutor**, PhD, Executive Director, CIT Utah; Director of Intensive Services, Davis Behavioral Health
10. **David Eldredge**, MSW, LCSW., Executive Director, Huntsman Mental Health Institute
11. **LeAnne Huff**, CMHC, Program Administrator, Crisis Programs; State Office of Substance Use and Mental Health
12. **Debra Widmer**, BSRC, RRT, CPHQ, Patient Safety Program Manager, CommonSpirit Holy Cross Jordan Valley; Director, Utah Shattering Silence Coalition
13. **Nate Crippes**, JD, Public Affairs Supervising Attorney, Disability Law Center
14. **Andrew Riggle**, Public Policy Advocate, Disability Law Center
15. **Zac Hashimoto**, Program Manager, Alternatives to Incarceration Program, Salt Lake Legal Defenders Association

**Sim Gill** ..... **Salt Lake County District Attorney**



Sim Gill was first elected as the Salt Lake County District Attorney in November 2010. DA Gill is a progressive champion on issues of therapeutic justice and alternatives to prosecution. Sim has pursued a pragmatic approach to criminal justice recognizing that reform is possible without compromising public safety. Sim believes in taking a systems approach to the issues of criminal and social justice, focusing on collaborative and community-oriented approaches. Data driven, evidence based, intentionally strategic and collaborative problem solving are critical to ensuring Justice, Fairness and Equality to our community. Sim believes that when crime happens it causes injuries to victims, offenders, and the communities where crime happens. True Justice is the repairing of all injuries. Sim has collaborated on the implementation of various therapeutic justice programs including: pre-filing diversions, mental health court, veterans court, domestic violence court, drug court, the Salt Lake Area Family Justice Center, Conviction Integrity Unit, and Camp Hope/Pathways Program. These approaches seek to rehabilitate offenders, support survivors, and assure public safety through a criminal justice system focused on justice, fairness, and proportionate accountability.

**Kelly Colopy** ..... **Salt Lake County Human Services Director**



Dynamic, energetic and innovative Health and Human Services Director with many years of experience in public health and the social determinants of health; including mental health, substance misuse, housing and homelessness, criminal justice alternatives, community development and education. Vast array of experience bringing a rare ability to understand and lead systems conversations from multiple perspectives to support collective, cross-system change efforts.

**Sherri Wittwer** ..... **MPA; Chair, Utah Coalition for Severe Mental Illness; Member, Utah Shattering Silence Coalition**



Sherri Wittwer is a long-time mental health advocate. She has worked in various capacities in the Utah mental health system, including as the Executive Director for the National Alliance on Mental Illness, at Optum Salt Lake County as the Network Director and Director of Housing and Community Partnerships, and as a Mental Health Advocate for the Disability Law Center. Sherri is an Adjunct Faculty Member for Salt Lake Community College and teaches Political Science in the Prison Education Program. Sherri is the Chair of the Utah Coalition for Severe Mental Illness, the Board President for CIT Utah, the Past Board President of the Utah Housing Coalition, the Utah Policy Director for the National Shattering Silence Coalition, and is a member of the Utah Shattering Silence Coalition. Sherri has a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Utah. She and her husband David are the parents of four children.



**Therese Cavlovic . . . . .**



**PhD; Professor of Economics, Weber State University; Member, Utah Shattering Silence Coalition**  
Therese Cavlovic is a Presidential Distinguished Professor of Economics at Weber State University. Her academic work has focused on valuing the economic benefits of public goods, with a particular emphasis on environmental resources. More recently, her research has turned toward one of society's most urgent challenges: understanding the economic and social costs of criminalizing individuals with severe mental illness versus investing in treatment, care, and wraparound services. Her commitment to mental health policy is deeply personal. After her college-aged son experienced a psychotic episode and became homeless on the streets of Pittsburgh, she became a passionate advocate for the real, lived rights of people with serious mental illness. She hopes that economic information will help guide more compassionate and cost-effective approaches to caring for people with severe mental illness.

**Dr. Noel Gardner . . . . .**



**MD; M.Div.; Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry**  
After his training at UCLA, Dr. Gardner was recruited to the University of Utah School of Medicine in Salt Lake City where for 15 years he was the Chief of Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry. During this time, he received many awards for his extensive teaching in the medical school curriculum, the psychiatry and family medicine residency programs, and in the Division of Medical Ethics and Medical Humanities, and rose to a Full Professor in the Clinical Track. During this time, he also developed a forensic practice, serving as an expert consultant and witness that ultimately involved over 200 cases. Dr. Gardner subsequently developed an outpatient practice specializing in difficult-to-treat mood disorders, and was involved in psychopharmacology research. He has served on many national advisory boards for a variety of companies, as well as on many speaker faculties. Near the end of his clinical career, he was the founder and medical director of a non-profit training clinic (Impact Mental Health) that provided free care to uninsured individuals with serious mental illness. In 2020, the clinic was given an award as "The Innovative Mental Health Charity of the Year" by a national psychiatric organization, and Dr. Gardner was named "The Humanitarian of the Year" by the Utah Medical Association. Since retiring at the end of 2022, Dr. Gardner has been a Scientific and Clinical Advisor for Best365 Labs, a company devoted to cost-effective health products that enhance mitochondrial health. He is also a co-owner of a patent for medical-psychiatric software that is in late-stage development and final testing.

**Judge (Ret.) Steven Leifman**



**Retired Judge; 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit of Florida; President, The Leifman Group**  
Judge Steve Leifman, a retired judge from the 11th Judicial Circuit of Florida and President of The Leifman Group, has made significant contributions to mental health and criminal justice reform in the United States. Serving from 2000 to 2024, he was the Associate Administrative Judge of the Miami-Dade County Court's Criminal Division. He played a pivotal role as a Special Advisor on Criminal Justice and Mental Health for the Supreme Court of Florida, where he chaired the Court's Mental Health Subcommittee. His work led to the influential report, "Transforming Florida's Mental Health System," aimed at reducing the justice system's involvement with those suffering from mental illnesses. Judge Leifman also established the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Criminal Mental Health Project in 2000 and chaired it until his retirement. His expertise has seen him appointed to numerous national and state bodies, including the American Bar Association Criminal Justice Mental Health Committee and the Florida Statewide Task Force on Opioid Abuse. Recognized with prestigious awards such as the 2015 William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence, he has been celebrated for his dedication to reform. On October 22, 2023, Judge Leifman was bestowed the Papal Medal Benemerenti from Pope Francis and presented by Archbishop Thomas Wenski for his work in the judicial system on behalf of people with mental illnesses. Judge Leifman's work was also featured in the documentary "The Definition of Insanity," aired on PBS, April 14, 2020, highlighting his innovative approach to the mental health crisis in America. The Definition of Insanity shows how one local judge's novel approach to solving the mental health crisis could be the model to tackle the much larger epidemic throughout America. Narrated by Rob Reiner. <https://doifilm.com/>

**Judy Hall . . . . .**



**MS; School Psychology, MSW; CSW; Member Utah Shattering Silence Coalition**  
Judy and her husband, Gary, are the parents to five children and grandparents to ten. At the age of 18, one of their sons was diagnosed with schizophrenia during his senior year of high school. Since that time, they have engaged in finding suitable treatment and support while they help him navigate this terrible illness. Judy serves as a volunteer with Utah Shattering Silence Coalition to promote positive system change within the state of Utah to ensure all individuals with psychosis-related illnesses and their families receive the evidence-based therapies and wrap around supports they need to manage and to recover from these illnesses. Judy has a MS in School Psychology from BYU. After her son's diagnosis, she returned to school and obtained an MSW in social work from Utah State University and currently holds a CSW license. She has worked at The Children's Center in Salt Lake City as a family therapist and then as a therapist with Family Services-Layton Office until her retirement in 2020.

**Dr. Doug Gray ..... MD, Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry and Child Psychiatry at the University of Utah, Member of Utah Coalition for Severe Mental Illness**



Dr. Doug Gray retired as a Professor of Psychiatry and Child Psychiatry at the University of Utah and is currently an Emeritus Professor. During his career, he saw patients, he supervised and mentored medical students, residents, and fellows, and organized all their training in psychiatry. He was a Suicidologist, who focused his research career on adolescent suicide, with the goal of improving suicide prevention programs nationally. He served as the Training Director for several psychiatry residency and fellowship programs and was Vice-Chair of the Psychiatry Department for 15 years. He served on many national committees and lectured nationally and internationally on suicide prevention and on the training of child psychiatrists.

**Todd Soutor ..... PhD; Executive Director, CIT Utah; Director of Intensive Services, Davis Behavioral Health**



Dr. Todd Soutor, Ph.D. has been a licensed psychologist in the state of Utah since 1996. He is initially from St. Paul, Minnesota. He received his bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College in psychology in 1985. After working two years in business, he returned to graduate school and received his master's degree in clinical psychology from Minnesota State University. Todd received his Ph.D. from Utah State University, which is one of three programs in the country that is accredited in Clinical, School, and Counseling Psychology disciplines. After finishing his academic coursework, Todd completed his clinical psychology internship at Denver General Hospital where he specialized in risk assessment, de-escalation, and psychological / neuropsychological assessment. Prior to coming to Utah, Todd received post-doctoral supervision at the University of Minnesota Medical School Department of Psychiatry. Todd has provided risk assessments and crisis intervention services for nearly twenty years in clinic, hospital, correctional, and community settings. Todd has several years' experience performing psychological evaluations, personality assessments, neuropsychological assessments, risk assessments, and forensic evaluations. Currently, Todd is the director of intensive services at Davis Behavioral Health, in addition to being the executive director of CIT Utah. In addition, Todd is a CIT Utah Regional Coordinator who works with and instructs law enforcement officers in mental health issues; he director of mental health court for Davis County; an advisory board member of the Childrens; Justice Center of Davis County; and a certified trainer for the Utah State Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health for designated examiners in the State of Utah.

**Dave Eldredge ..... MSW; LCSW; Executive Director, Huntsman Mental Health Institute**



Dave Eldredge, MSW, LCSW, serves as Executive Director of Huntsman Mental Health Institute. With over 25 years of leadership experience in behavioral health, Eldredge brings a wealth of expertise in clinical operations, strategic planning, and mental health program development to this critical role. Eldredge, who has served in various capacities at University of Utah Health, including Senior Director of Clinical Operations at Huntsman Mental Health Institute, will now oversee clinical operations. As Executive Director, Eldredge will oversee the institute's clinical services, including the 161-bed hospital, outpatient clinics, telehealth programs, crisis care initiatives, and residential services. Eldredge has held key leadership roles across several leading health care organizations, including Intermountain Health and Valley Mental Health. Prior to his current role, he served as Director of Behavioral Health Crisis at Huntsman Mental Health Institute, where he helped develop one of the nation's most comprehensive crisis response systems.

**LeAnne Huff ..... CMHC; Program Administrator, Crisis Programs; State Office of Substance Use and Mental Health**



LeAnne Huff received her Bachelor of Science and her Masters of Education in Educational Psychology from the University of Utah. She worked for 7 years at Valley Mental Health Community Treatment Program as a supervisor providing crisis intervention to individuals with serious mental illness. She served as the mental health Regional Coordinator for the Utah Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program for Salt Lake County helping to coordinate CIT trainings as well as providing Suicide Prevention/Intervention training to the CIT Academy. In 2011 she took a position with the University of Utah Neuropsychiatric Institute's (UNI) Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT). In this role at UNI she worked collaboratively with community stakeholders, including, CIT Utah, local law enforcement and fire departments to roll out the new set of crisis services to Salt Lake County Residents, as well as providing crisis intervention to individuals in the community. In 2012 LeAnne joined the Utah State Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health as a program manager for adult mental health. In this position she provided oversight and monitoring of adult mental health services in the State of Utah promoting behavioral health integration, early intervention, and recovery. Currently LeAnne is a crisis administrator at the Utah Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health where she is responsible for the implementation, evaluation, and monitoring of the statewide Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams, the Designated Examiner Certification Program, and the statewide Crisis Intervention Team Program (CIT).

**Debra Widmer** ..... **BSRC; RRT; CPHQ; Patient Safety Program Manager, CommonSpirit Holy Cross Jordan Valley; Director, Utah Shattering Silence Coalition**



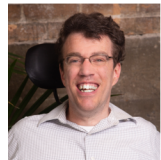
Debra is a semi-retired healthcare professional and committed mental health advocate with Utah Shattering Silence Coalition. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Care and is a Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality (CPHQ), with years of experience in healthcare system leadership roles focused on quality, risk management, and patient safety. With experience in both clinical care and family caregiving, Debra brings firsthand insight into the challenges faced by individuals and families impacted by serious mental illness/brain disorders. Her experience navigating behavioral health care systems, housing instability, and crisis response pathways has shaped her dedication to reforming public policy and increasing awareness of the urgent need for compassionate, coordinated, and accountable care. Debra is the Director of the Utah Shattering Silence Coalition, where she works to elevate stories from the frontlines of severe mental illness, promote the use of long-acting medications, advocate for supportive housing expansion, and improve understanding of HIPAA's application during psychiatric emergencies.

**Nate Crippes** ..... **BA; JD; Public Affairs Supervising Attorney, Disability Law Center**



Nate Crippes is the Public Affairs Supervising Attorney at the Disability Law Center (DLC), overseeing the DLC's, intake, public policy, and communications teams. In this role, he has greatly expanded the DLC's public policy advocacy, and he has built many relationships with members of the media to bring awareness to disability rights issues in Utah. Previously, he was a staff attorney at the DLC using both public policy advocacy and traditional legal methods to address Medicaid/healthcare issues, discrimination in the education and employment context, and ADA accessibility issues. He also worked on the DLC's legal team that filed and settled a systemic class action lawsuit under Title II of the ADA/Olmstead to ensure the full integration of individuals residing in institutional settings. Prior to joining the DLC in 2015, Nate worked on numerous state and local political campaigns in Utah. He has a B.A. in Film Studies from the University of Utah and a J.D. from the Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University.

**Andrew Riggle** ..... **BS; MA; Public Policy Advocate, Disability Law Center**



Andrew Riggle has been the Disability Law Centers public policy advocate for 18 years. Mr. Riggle works closely with elected officials, policymakers, and community partners to enable individuals with disabilities to live self-determined, independent, and integrated lives in their community. Prior to joining the DLC, Mr. Riggle served as Medicaid policy director for the Utah Health Policy Project, where he focused on strategies to increase access to medically necessary care, improve the quality of care, and manage costs within the program. Before joining UHPP, Andrew helped low-income students and their families access community resources as West High School's family involvement coordinator. He has a master's in educational counseling and a bachelor's in sociology.

**Zac Hashimoto** ..... **Program Manager, Alternatives to Incarceration Program, Salt Lake Legal Defenders Association**



Zac graduated with a Bachelor of Psychology from the University of Utah. He has ten years of experience working in the social services industry. During his career, he has worked with a number of populations including immigrants and refugees, people living with Alzheimer's and Dementia, people in halfway housing for the Division of Services of People with Disabilities, and as a SSDI and SSI representative payee. His primary work has always been with people with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness who may be unhoused and justice involved. Zac is currently at the Salt Lake Legal Defenders Association and is the Program Manager for the Alternatives to Incarceration program where he has been involved in the creation and implementation of the new pilot of the Project Rio program.

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