



**We empower people of all ages to achieve success – at home, at work.  
We believe a connected community is a thriving community.**

## **NMCS Mental/Behavioral Health and Wellness Programs**

Our person-centered approach to mental health services offers individuals and families a chance to achieve a better quality of life. We provide integrated trauma-informed and culturally centered services to children, adolescents, families, and adults who would benefit from mental health services and supports.

Services are provided in our main clinic at 680 Wilson Ave, at the Novato Teen Clinic, and in schools throughout the Novato Unified School District. We are also able to offer confidential telemental health services.



**To get started, please call (415) 892-1643, ext 239  
(se habla Español) for a confidential phone assessment.**

### **Clinical Supervisors and Administrative Staff:**



#### **Alaina Cantor, LCSW, Senior Director of Wellness and Impact**

Alaina (she/her/siya) is a social service professional with over twenty-five years of experience developing, evaluating and managing programs designed to improve the quality of life of diverse communities. Her administrative skills are uniquely complemented by her therapeutic experience, as she is highly effective in helping children and families address issues stemming from complex trauma, mental health disorders and psychosocial stressors.

Alaina received the 2010 Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award from the Marin County Human Rights Commission for her work developing a Promotores (community health advocate) program with Berta Campos-Anicetti, MPH and the Novato Youth Center while she served as the Associate Executive Director. Alaina left the organization to pursue a long-held goal of obtaining her license as a clinical social worker but returned to North Marin Community Services in October 2019, bringing with her extensive clinical experience as an LCSW. While working with Kaiser Permanente and with Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC's) in the Bay Area, Alaina gained proficiency in providing psychotherapy to under-served patients while also helping to oversee integrated behavioral health services in an administrative capacity. She facilitated a successful Psychiatric Grand Rounds program, served youth and families in an outpatient eating disorder treatment program, implemented Medication Assistant Treatment (MAT) programs, and practiced an array of evidenced-based therapy modalities including Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and Family-Based Therapy (FBT), among others.

Born and raised in Novato, Alaina enjoys exploring the S.F. Bay Area with her husband and two daughters.



### **Donnell Holmes-Carson, LMFT, Clinical Director**

Donnell is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist with over 14 years of experience working with adults and children experiencing severe and persistent mental illness and trauma. Donnell has worked extensively in both the for-profit and non-profit business sectors and was the owner/operator of her own bookkeeping business for many years. Donnell enjoys working in a setting where she can utilize both her knowledge and skills in program planning and administration and her skills in therapy.

Donnell earned her M.A. degree in Counseling Psychology from Sonoma State University. Prior to becoming a therapist, Donnell pursued a teaching credential and has been certified as an Instructor of Trainers by Girl Scouts U.S.A. and has developed and led many staff and agency trainings. She has created and implemented multiple mental health rehabilitation programs and effectively managed budgets exceeding \$2 million. Her latest endeavor was to research, select and help implement a therapeutic social and emotional learning curriculum for the YWCA's preschool program. Donnell is trained in multiple therapy modalities including wraparound, cognitive behavioral therapy, Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, Dialectical Behavioral Therapies (DBT) and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and is certified by Boston University's Center for psychiatric rehabilitation in psycho-social rehabilitation and Hazelden's Co-Occurring Disorders program.

Donnell and her husband enjoy farm life where they have two large fluffy cats, dogs, mules and chickens and love to spend time taking daytrips to local or nearby points of interest whenever they can. Donnell loves to organize and plan events and to use any other spare time for sewing, quilting and crafting.



### **Jason Newman, LMFT, Lead Clinical Supervisor**

Jason (he/him/His) brings a breadth of experience, with a particular passion for working with marginalized youth and the LGBTQ+ population, including transgender youth. He received his undergraduate degree at University of California, Santa Cruz and his master's degree from University of San Francisco. He has worked with adults with severe and persistent mental illness, as well as with children and low-income families, offering a variety of therapeutic services in schools and community-based settings. Some of Jason's prior experience ranges from doing Gottman's couples therapy to TAY (transitional age youth) case management and serving populations such as justice involved youth. He has been trained in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) from the Linehan Institute and Psychwire. Jason also has experience and training in CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy), narrative therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction.

Jason believes in the mind-body connection and enjoys teaching others how taking care of the body can help our mental health. He is passionate about helping clients gain compassion for a larger sense of self. Self-acceptance and being your own unique individual are core components that have driven Jason to want to be a therapist and are some of the reasons he continues to connect with so many who are on the path to embracing oneself and loving oneself fully. Jason is also highly interested in doing groups as well as providing family therapy especially with youth who do not feel like they are given a voice in their day to day lives.



**Marlia Keeley-Newbold, LMFT, Clinical Supervisor**

Marli (she/hers) is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist who has been working with North Marin Community Services since 2015. She is passionate about helping new clinicians learn and grow in this field and is experienced in supporting children and families to strengthen their relationships, She hold a certification in Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) and has worked with children and families in many different capacities in addition to her role as a therapist and clinical

supervisor. These roles include supporting parents on a parental support hotline, volunteering for multiple mentoring programs which focus on reaching individuals from underserved populations, including at-risk adolescents, children in the foster care system, and developmentally disabled youth. Marli received her Master's in Counseling Psychology from the Wright Institute and she holds a B.A. in Sociology and Educational Studies from Colorado College.

When she is not working, Marli enjoys spending time with her son and husband hiking through the hills of Marin County.



**Laura Abel, Data and Evaluation Manager**

Laura (she/her/hers) is happy to be part of the team at North Marin Community Services. She is a Bay Area native, raised in Petaluma. Laura is a graduate of Santa Rosa Junior College and UC Berkeley, where she majored in Social Welfare. After working as an IT consultant for non-profit organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area, she spent several years as a data analyst at Santa Rosa Junior College. She joined the North Marin Community Services team in March of 2022, where

she is able to combine her background in social work and data analysis while supporting the mental health and wellness staff as an assistant manager.

In her spare time, Laura hangs out with her cat Andromeda, reads everything under the sun, and devotes endless hours to solving puzzles.



### **Christina Hetzer, West Marin Wellness Program Manager**

Christina Hetzer (she|her) completed six years of a Ph.D. program in Clinical Psychology at Palo Alto University with an emphasis in LGBTQ+ Psychology. She has experience working with marginalized and underserved adults and children in various settings including community mental health, residential, shelters for the unhoused, and the juvenile justice system. She has a background in case management, triage and crisis response, and psychological assessment and evaluation. She stepped away from the program in

2017, after obtaining a master's degree, to explore other career opportunities in the field while focusing on her other dream of starting a family. Without hesitation, she took the first opportunity that presented – school-based prevention and early intervention – and has grown in this position, working out in Shoreline Unified ever since. Through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) grant-funded position, Christina has provided individual and group counseling for students (K-12) and has supported training/education and outreach for students, staff, and parents/caregivers in various areas including social-emotional learning, restorative practices, trauma-informed care, suicide prevention, substance abuse, and social media safety. Her background in Animal-Assisted Therapy has been welcomed in Shoreline and she hopes to continue serving the community with a four-legged friend at her side. More recently Christina's role has shifted to a focus on program development and coordination of services to enhance school climate/culture and improve access to care.

Christina takes great pride in the collaborative relationships she's built with community partners and colleagues throughout Marin County and the more intimate relationships she's built with students, staff, and families within Shoreline. It is through these connections she feels rooted in the community in which she serves.

Christina lives in Sonoma County with her spouse and two children. She enjoys spending time outdoors, working in the garden, hiking, biking, and going on adventures with her family.

## **Clinical Staff:**



### **Andrea Alphonso-Gibbs, Associate Marriage & Family Therapist (AMFT)**

Andrea emigrated to the United States from Guyana when she was 9 years old. As the eldest of four siblings, she helped her family navigate and adjust to their new circumstances in the northeastern region of the country. After graduating with a general science degree, she worked with young adults and families in higher education as an admission counselor. Later she continued in the technology field where some of her duties involved helping international researchers get adjusted and settled within the community. After having children, she retrained and worked with parents and students, providing support to families by teaching children, conducting parenting classes and mentoring those others in Early Childhood Education. Andrea graduated from Dominican University with a Master's in Counseling Psychology and has provided psychotherapy to young adults.

Andrea strives to provide children and families with attuned collaborative care, working to reinforce strengths, build skills and use play and the arts to creatively and more fully integrate mind and body to promote and augment healing through common stressors and transitions. In her spare time, she likes to be active by hiking and gardening. She also enjoys reading, meditating and making useful beautiful objects by knitting, sewing and painting.



### **Andrea Melano, Associate Marriage & Family Therapist (AMFT)**

Andrea Melano is the daughter of Mexican immigrant parents and was born and raised in San Pablo, CA located in the East Bay. She attended Saint Mary's College of California (SMC) for her undergraduate studies and obtained her B.A. in Spanish. During her time at SMC, she discovered her love for traveling, learning about new cultures and traditions when she studied abroad in Spain and Mexico for a year and a half. Andrea also obtained her master's degree in Counseling from SMC where she specialized in College Student Services, Marriage Family Therapy, and Professional Clinical Counseling.

Andrea has worked in the academic field for over 10 years supporting the low-income, minority, and immigrant student population. Before joining NMCS as a Bilingual Mental Health Clinician, she provided academic, career, and personal counseling to community college students at Merritt College in Oakland. During the pandemic she decided to expand her knowledge and received her Integrative Nutrition Health Coach Certificate. She decided to take on this certificate program to be able to support individuals' mental health and overall well-being in a holistic way. Andrea loves nature; you can find her exploring trails throughout the Bay Area. She also has a deep love for dancing Latin music, spending time with her family and loved ones, traveling, and eating delicious food, pastries, and desserts. Andrea enjoys being part of the NMCS family and being of service to the Novato community.



### **Brenda Fonarev, Associate Marriage & Family Therapist (AMFT)**

Brenda is excited to be joining the team at North Marin Community Services as a Mental Health Associate Clinician II. Brenda has over 20 years of experience in child welfare helping families manage such challenges as substance misuse, domestic violence and mental health issues. Her first position was with the Families First Program in Pontiac, Michigan where she learned to team with families while her most recent position with Sonoma County allowed her the opportunity to provide counseling and preventative and supportive services that were inclusive and promoted wellbeing. Brenda holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from UCLA and a master's degree in Counseling from Cal State Fullerton. She is a lifelong learner who feels it is important to continue growing as a mental health professional. Brenda and her husband live in Novato and have enjoyed raising their two children in this community. She enjoys reading, hiking and spending time with her family.



### **Carmen Perez, Associate Clinical Social Worker (ACSW)**

Carmen holds a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree and is a bilingual therapist (offering services in Spanish & English) with North Marin Community Services. She is also a Salvadorean/Canadian born in El Salvador. She is a painter and sees the world through an artistic mind, striving to add beauty, order, and healing to her life and that of her clients. She likes to volunteer to engage in community life, to share herself, and to learn from other people. In the past, she has worked with different populations when serving clients and is proud to serve Latinx clients at NMCS. She is very committed to the mission and work of NMCS.



### **Christie Rovira, Associate Marriage & Family Therapist (AMFT)**

Christie (she/her) joined North Marin Community Services in August 2021. She provides school-based therapy at San Jose Intermediate School and also sees clients through NMCS' community-based agency services. Christie will received her Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology from Dominican University. Christie incorporates a variety of treatment modalities into her work and is especially interested in Somatic, Attachment and Biopsychosocial Psychology. Christie has an incessant curiosity about the interdependent relationship between mental and physical health – especially while enduring chronic and/or acute stress. Through personal experience and professional training, Christie embraces the undeniable mind/body connection and is humbled by how small adjustments in one's life can create positive change.



**Elise Holland, Associate Marriage Family Therapist (Associate MFT)**

Elise is excited to transition from being an MFT Trainee to an AMFT at North Marin Community Services! She will continue providing mental health counseling services to adolescents at Sinaloa Middle School, as well as taking on more agency clients. Elise has just finished her Master's in Counseling Psychology from the California Institute of Integral Studies and is pursuing her MFT license. Prior to this work, Elise was a recruiter, building teams for a variety of Bay Area technical companies. Elise grew up in England before moving to Michigan, then Boston and finally the Bay Area. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading, hiking and writing children's fantasy. She is most passionate about holding clients in unconditional positive regard; combining transpersonal aspects of psychotherapy with evidence-based modalities such as CBT, DBT and trauma-informed care.



**George Nicol, Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist (LMFT)**

George Nicol is a graduate of the Counseling Psychology program at Dominican University and has served as a mental health clinician with North Marin Community Services since 2019. George has a specialty in providing care and dedicated support to adolescents and families and has served as a primary therapist at San Jose & Sinaloa Middle School for the past three years. In addition to school-based therapy, George also provides therapeutic care to the community through NMCS' sliding scale services and NMCS' contract with Marin County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services. George connects with his clients through his warm and engaging presence, attuning to the needs of his clients, and empowering individuals to be the experts of their own experience. George utilizes strength-based, motivational, cognitive behavioral, and narrative techniques to support his clients to build skills that will allow them to achieve their personal goals.



**Marika Yakumithis, Associate Marriage Family Therapist and Professional Clinical Counselor (AMFT, APCC)**

Marika Yakumithis is excited to be joining the team at North Marin Community Services. She is a recent graduate of Dominican University, earning a Master's in Counseling Psychology pursuing MFT and PCC licensures. Marika, a Bay Area native, enjoys trying different restaurants throughout the Bay, going for walks with her dogs and spouse, and spending time with her family and close friends. She states, "I appreciate the opportunity to give back to my community by providing mental health services and support through counseling."



### **Cerbelio Grijalva-Reyes, Mental Health Associate Clinician**

Cerbelio (he/him/el) is excited to embark on this new journey as a Bilingual Mental Health Associate Clinician at North Marin Community. As a first-generation Latino college graduate, Cerbelio brings valuable experiences from working in non-profit organizations and school districts. His primary goal is to support and break down the negative stigmas associated with mental health in our community. Cerbelio recently completed his master's degree in education, as a Marriage and Family Therapist at Sonoma State University. He continues to be actively involved and contributes as a board member on the SSU alumni committee. Outside of his academic and professional endeavors, he finds joy in coaching soccer in both Novato and San Rafael. When he is not assisting clients or coaching, Cerbelio enjoys quality time spent with family and friends.



### **Jenny Maldonado, Marriage Family Therapist Trainee (MFTT)**

Jenny joins North Marin Community Services with a profound passion for supporting and helping uplift immigrant communities. She was born and raised in Marin County. In recent years, she has obtained two associate degrees from College of Marin, a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and is currently working on her master's degree at Dominican University of California in order to become a licensed therapist. Jenny brings with her the experience of being a daughter to immigrant parents and the eldest sibling of a blended family. She hopes that the challenges she has overcome will help her connect and empower individuals of similar backgrounds. In addition to her educational accomplishments, Jenny enjoys teaching dance to teenagers, coaching group fitness classes, and journaling in front of a sunrise.



### **Danielle LaBrie, Marriage Family Therapist Trainee (MFTT)**

Danielle is excited to begin the new school year as a Mental Health Trainee at North Marin Community Services. She will be working with students at Lu Sutton Elementary School. Danielle is currently working on getting her Master from San Francisco State University in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Her primary goal is to provide students with a supportive environment in which they can learn about themselves and how to navigate and thrive in the world. Outside of the classroom, Danielle enjoys hiking with her dog in beautiful Marin, cooking, yoga and time spent with friends. She states, "I am excited to have an opportunity to make a positive impact on young people's lives."





### **Vita Born, Marriage Family Therapist Trainee (MFTT)**

Vita is excited to join North Marin Community Services as an MFT Trainee. She is from Brooklyn, NY originally and has lived in the Bay Area since 2015. She has a BA in Philosophy from University of California - Berkeley and is currently a Master's student at Alliant International University. She's worked as a Coaching and Research Project Manager at Parent Lab, a parenting startup and has worked directly with parents seeking support in a variety of parenting

issues. She loves hiking, traveling, biking, as well as cooking and baking. She states, "I am passionate about supporting people through difficult times and being able to offer curiosity, compassion, and empathy to those I engage with, no matter their background."



### **Veronica Guillen, Marriage Family Therapist Trainee (MFTT)**

Veronica is thrilled to be joining the team at North Marin Community Service. She is a current MFT graduate student at Touro University Worldwide pursuing a Master's in Marriage and Family Therapy in order to become a licensed therapist. Veronica immigrated to San Francisco from Nicaragua as a young child and loves making the Bay Area her home. She has worked with several Marin County agencies that focus on serving victims of domestic violence and Marin county's

unhoused population. She has also worked in early childhood education, and as an educational aide for teens affected by Autism. Veronica is grateful to have raised her children in the Bay Area and enjoys spending time with her family and learning new things. She states, "I am passionate about helping others and the opportunity to create meaningful connections that support a sense of well-being."



### **Ivy Sanford, Marriage Family Therapist Trainee (MFTT)**

Ivy is thrilled to join the team at NMCS as an MFT Trainee . She is completing her Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology at the Wright Institute in Berkeley, and is particularly interested in narrative and strength-based therapy modalities, as well as expressive arts and DBT. She lived in Italy and New Mexico prior to returning to family roots in the Bay Area, and her background includes connecting with underserved communities through AmeriCorps and volunteer ESL

work, and Italian translation and wine imports. Ivy is passionate about helping people uncover and develop their own strengths and empowering them to leverage these in building the life they want. In her free time, Ivy enjoys traveling, spending time in nature and working on creative sewing projects.



### **Yvette Garcia, Marriage Family Therapist Trainee (MFTT)**

Yvette Garcia (she/her) holds Master's Degree in Organizational Psychology and Education (emphasis in special education), as well as a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology. She has worked in education for over 15 years in various roles including therapeutic after-school counselor, paraeducator, resource teacher and program specialist at

both the early intervention and high school levels. Over 9 of these years were dedicated to serving families in the Novato community.

After many years in education, Yvette decided to finally pursue her lifelong dream to become a therapist. Yvette is especially passionate about working with children and families to increase protective factors and build resilience, support healthy and healing relationships (via bonding and secure attachment) and work towards improved quality of life. Yvette believes that people are amazing and resilient beings who are doing their best with the resources they have and who deserve support to improve their lives in ways that are most meaningful to them. She partners with families to discover and promote what healing and well-being means to them. Yvette is honored to be welcomed to the NMCS mental health clinicians team of trainees and to be part of such a highly-regarded organization doing important work in the Novato community.

