



ACCREDITATION  
RISK MANAGEMENT



RESEARCH  
INTERNAL  
EXTERNAL



CONFERENCES



INSURANCE

# Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare Center

February 2017 Newsletter



OBH Center Director, Mike Gass with his daughter Amaryth, Anita Tucker, and current and past UNH students after receiving the 2016 OBH Eagle Award at the Wilderness Therapy Symposium in Park City, UT

## Accreditation

The OBH Center continues to support the process of accreditation by organizing review teams, interfacing with the AEE accreditation staff and Council members, helping to schedule accreditation visits, training OBH Council members in the accreditation process, providing administrative support by sending UNH graduate students to each visit, and helping programs manage their processes. We currently have 13 accredited programs and hope to continue to add programs in the future.

**13 Accredited Programs:** As of 2017, we have 13 accredited programs including the Aspiro Group, Elements Wilderness Program, Redcliff Ascent, Summit Achievement, Open Sky, Evoke at Entrada, Anasazi, Evoke at Cascades, New Vision – West Coast, SUWS of the Carolinas, Legacy Outdoor Adventures, Outback Therapeutic Expeditions, Trails Carolina.

## Conferences

Throughout 2016 and into 2017, OBH research scientists and affiliated researchers have presented on numerous topics at 10 different conferences:

### Conferences in 2016-2017 featuring OBH researchers included:

- 1st New Zealand Adventure Therapy Conference, New Zealand
- American Psychiatric Association Meeting, Atlanta, GA
- American Psychological Association, Denver, CO
- International Congress of Psychology, Yokohama, Japan
- National Association for Experiential Education Conference, Minneapolis, MN
- National Association for Therapeutic Schools and Programs Annual Conference 2016, La Jolla, CA.
- National Association for Therapeutic Schools and Programs Annual Conference 2017, Tucson, AZ.
- National Wilderness Therapy Symposium, Park City, UT
- Regional Wilderness Therapy Symposium, Asheville, NC
- Western Association of Counselor Education and Supervision, Vancouver, BC

### Upcoming Conference Highlights: 2017 Regional WTS

This year at the Regional Wilderness Therapy Symposium in Asheville, NC, Mike Gass and Lee Gillis will be conducting the first inaugural **case study presentation** on April 6th. This six-hour workshop will feature leading OBH therapists in the field. Each of these therapists will present an actual case study demonstrating how changes occur in OBH settings. Some of the featured presenters will be:

Steven **DeMille** from Redcliff Ascent

Tara **Stireman** from Elements

Tony **Isselmann** from Open Sky

Derek **Daley** from Legacy

Liz **Deardorff** from New Vision

Lynette **Spencer** from Adventure Works.

Matt **Hoag** from Evoke at Entrada

Nate **Mitchell** from Anasazi

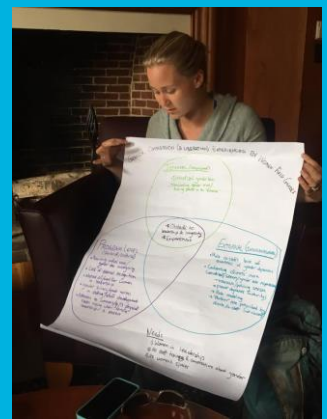
Jessa **Hobson** from Elements

Jason **McKeown** from Carolina Trails

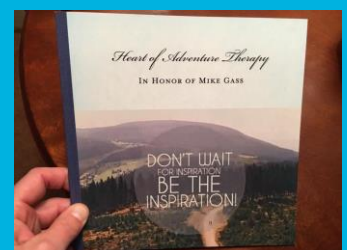
Jacob **Thomason** from New Vision



Anita Tucker and Bobbi Beale, Board President of AEE, after Anita was awarded the AEE Distinguished Researcher Award in 2016



OBH research scientists supporting Maggie Karoff and her work on identifying the obstacles to leadership and longevity for female filed guides



Mike Gass received the Heart of Adventure Therapy award at the International AEE Conference in 2016

Don't miss the upcoming TAPG Best Practices conference in Durham, New Hampshire coming up this June. Coming soon are the Call for Proposals:



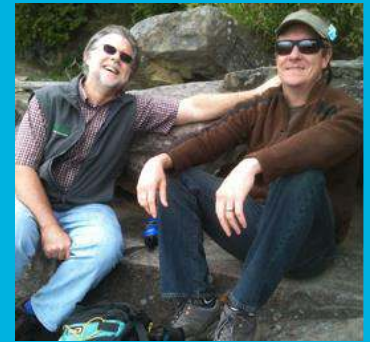
## Risk Management

The OBH Center continues to collect yearly risk management data from program members in effort to show an accurate appraisal of OBH Programs as well as help to improve upon the risk management of the programs. OBH Council member programs have been collecting detailed information about incidents that occur during OBH treatment since 2001. It is now the longest-running operational risk management database in the outdoor programming industry.

## Research Updates: Internal

**NATSAP PRN Database Update:** Over 12,000 clients participate in the NATSAP PRN and have completed at least one clinical instrument (e.g., YOQ) at intake.

- On average, both adolescent and adult clients arrive to treatment with clinically significant levels of behavioral and emotional dysfunction, with **clinically significant improvements in symptoms at discharge**. These improvements are maintained at 6 and 12 months post-discharge
- The past year has seen the **largest growth** of OBH clients in the database since the inception of the NATSAP PRN
- **Automation** of program reports has led to significant improvements starting this year. Programs will now receive **progress reports quarterly**. The reports will have significantly more detail than previous versions, including iterative graphs. The first version of this report will be sent out in mid-August.



OBH Researchers Lee Gillis and Keith Russell at Enviros doing their research!



OBH Researchers Mike Gass, Bobbi Beale, and Steve DeMille convened at Anita Tucker's home for a BBQ during a visit to New England in Sept. 2016



Christine Norton with her "coasteering" group from the 1st New Zealand Adventure Therapy conference where she was a keynote!





Check out this **TED talk** from TEDx Cranmore discussing the **nature of addiction** and why wilderness offers a treatment option that works (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILKqF2Vr1Ns>)

## Research Updates: External

**Publications:** 2016 (and early 2017) was an amazing year for OBH publishing literature across various disciplines with many additional articles in press or under review. Research scientists and affiliated researchers of the OBH Center published **23 new peer-reviewed** articles, available for reading, plus had an additional **5 new pieces accepted** (in press) with more publications under review. That is a total of 28 new pieces of research out in the professional literature! Below are the most recent additions to the field from 2016 to the present:

### Published in 2016/2017 (so far)

Becker, S., & Russell, K. C. (2016). *Wilderness therapy for adolescents*. In, R. J. R. Levesque (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of adolescence* (2nd ed.). New York: Springer Books.

Behrens, E. (2016). Preface: A Tipping point for the Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs, *Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs*, 8, 4-5.

Bettmann, J. E., Gillis, H. L., Speelman, E. A., Parry, K. J., & Case, J. M. (2016). A Meta-analysis of Wilderness Therapy Outcomes for private pay clients. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 25(9), 2659-2673.

Bettmann, J.E., Tucker, A., Behrens, E., & Vanderloo, M. (2017). Changes in older adolescents and young adults' attachment, separation, and mental health during wilderness therapy. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 26(2), 511-522. doi: 10.1007/s10826-016-0577-4

Chang, T., Tucker, A., Javorski, S., Gass, M., & Norton, C. (2016). Cultural issues in adventure programming: Applying Hofstede's five dimensions to assessment and practice. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*. Advance online edition. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14729679.2016.1259116>

Combs, K. M. (2016). What does it take to get post-discharge data? *Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs*, 8(1), 18-23.

Combs, K. M., Hoag, M., Javorski, S., & Roberts, S. (2016). Adolescent self-assessment of an Outdoor Behavioral Health program: longitudinal outcomes and trajectories of change. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 25(11), 3322-3330. doi: 10.1007/s10826-016-0497-3

DeMille, S. M., & Montgomery, M. (2016). Integrating narrative family therapy in an Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare program: A case study. *Journal of Contemporary Family Therapy*, 38(1), 3-13.

Gillis, H.L., Kivlighan, D. M., & Russell, K.C. (2016). Between-client and within-client engagement and outcome in a residential wilderness treatment group: An actor partner interdependence analysis. *Psychotherapy*, 53(4), 413-423.

Gillis Jr, H. L., Speelman, E., Linville, N., Bailey, E., Kalle, A., Oglesbee, N., Sandlin, J., Thompson, L., & Jensen, J. (2016). Meta-analysis of treatment outcomes measured by the Y-OQ and Y-OQ-SR: Comparing wilderness and non-wilderness treatment programs. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 45(6), 851-863.

Hoag, M. J., Combs, K. M., Roberts, S. D., Logan, P. (2016). Pushing beyond outcome: What else changes in wilderness therapy? *Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs*, 8(1), 45-56.

Liermann, K., & Norton, C.L. (2016). Positive relationship outcomes between parents and adolescent children following a therapeutic wilderness program for struggling teens. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 38, 14-22. doi: 10.1007/s10591-015-9371-5

Massey, K., Hoag, M., Roberts, S., & Javorski, S. (2016). A multilevel model to examine adolescent outcomes in Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare: The parent perspective. *Child and Youth Care Forum*, 45, 353-365.

Norton, C.L., & Peyton, J. (2017). Mindfulness-based practice in Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare. *Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs*, 9(1), 7-20.

Roberts, S., Stroud, D., Hoag, M. J., & Combs, K. M. (2017). Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare: Client and treatment characteristics effects on young adult outcomes. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 39(3), 288-302. doi: 10.1177/1053825916655445

Roberts, S., Stroud, D., Hoag, M. J., & Massey, K. (2017). Outdoor behavioral healthcare: A longitudinal assessment of young adult outcomes. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 95, 45-55.

Russell, K., & Gillis, H. L. (2017). The Adventure Therapy Experience Scale: The psychometric properties of a scale to measure the unique factors moderating an adventure therapy experience. *Journal of Experiential Education*, Advance online edition. doi: 1053825917690541.

Russell, K. C., Gillis, H. L., & Heppner, W. (2016). An examination of mindfulness-based experiences through adventure in substance use disorder treatment for young adult males: A pilot study. *Mindfulness*, 7(2), 320-328. doi: 10.1007/s12671-015-0441-4

Tucker, A., Combs, K. M., Bettman, J., Chang, T., Graham, S., Hoag, M., & Tatum, C. (2016). Longitudinal outcomes for youth transported to wilderness therapy programs. *Research on Social Work Practice*. Advance online edition. doi: 10.1177/1049731516647486.

Tucker, A.R., Norton, C.L., DeMille, S., & Hobson. (2016). The impact of wilderness therapy on physical and emotional health: Utilizing an integrated approach in Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 39(1), 15-30. doi: 10.1177/1053825915607536

Tucker, A.R., Norton, C.L., Itin, C., Hobson, J., & Alvarez, M.A. (2016). Adventure therapy: Non-deliberative group therapy in action. *Social Work with Groups*, 39(2-3), 194-207. doi: 10.1080/01609513.2015.1048416



OBH Researcher Dr. Christine Norton is currently a Fulbright Scholar in Taiwan teaching adventure therapy. Check out her blog to follow along with her travels:

<http://fornowweseeblogspot.tw/>

Tucker, A., Paul, M., Hobson, J., Karoff, M., & Gass, M. (2016). Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare: Its impact on family functioning. *Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs*, 8, 21-40. doi: 10.19157/JTSP.issue.08.01.05

Tucker, A., Widmer, M., Faddis, T., Randolph, B., & Gass, M. (2016). Family therapy in Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare: Current practices and future possibilities. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 38, 32-42. doi: 10.1007/s10591-015-9370-6

### In Press

Avery, M.E., Norton, C. L., & Tucker, A.R. (In press). Blazing a trail...together: The need for mentoring and collaboration among women in outdoor leadership in D. Mitten (Ed.), *Nourishing terrains: Women's contributions to outdoor learning*. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillian.

Norton, C.L. & Liermann, K. (In press). Exploring the impact of a therapeutic wilderness program for struggling teens on family relationship outcomes. In J. Christenson & A. Merritts (Eds.), *Family therapy with adolescents in residential settings –Research and interventions*.

Norton, C.L., & Tucker, A.R., Farnham, M., Borroel, F., & Pelletier, A. (In press). Family enrichment adventure therapy: A mixed methods study examining the impact of trauma-informed adventure therapy on children and families affected by abuse. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma*.

Simonds, J., Behrens, E., Holzbauer, J. (in press). Competency-Based Education in a Traditional Higher Education Setting: Case Study of an Introduction to Psychology Course. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*.

Tucker, A.R., Widmer, M., Faddis, T., Randolph, B., & Gass, M (in press). *Engaging families in Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare*. In J. Christenson & A. Merritts (Eds.), *Family therapy with adolescents in residential settings –Research and interventions*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Co.

**Don't forget to visit <https://www.obhcenter.org/research-scientists> to contact authors for a copy of publications**

## Insurance

The OBH Center and in particular Dr. Gass continues to support the funding of OBH programs. Programs have increased organizational capabilities due to dramatic increase in refereed journal articles, presence of the OBH center, and access to researchers. This has led to repealed denials of insurance claims, the ability to obtain pretreatment approval of payments, an advance in the belief system of insurance companies, and has positioned OBHC for third-party payments. The total number of managed care litigation cases contesting the coverage of mental health benefits has grown significantly since 2014 leading to more cases involving Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare insurance claims which have led to significant settlements where families have been able to recoup funds previously denied by insurance companies.

**Language.** We continue to encourage OBH programs to use the terms “**INTERMEDIATE CARE**” both in their marketing materials and their websites, and as OBH researchers we have focused on including this language as well in our publications. In addition, we also strongly encourage programs that once they are accredited you "broadcast/strongly publicize" the accreditation achievement.

# OBH in the News

## News Articles:

“*Adventure Therapy reaches traumatized kids*” News article of Bobbi Beale’s work running adventure therapy programs in Wood County, Ohio. (<http://bgindependentmedia.org/adventure-therapy-reaches-traumatized-kids/>)

“*Journal of Counseling & Development Features Evoke Therapy Programs’ Outcome Study*” News highlighting Evoke Therapy Program outcome study. (<https://www.benzinga.com/pressreleases/17/01/p8935923/journal-of-counseling-development-features-evoke-therapy-programs-outco>)

“*The Great Outdoors: DeKalb nonprofit and counseling center proving that adventure works*” News article featuring Adventure Works success in DeKalb county Illinois. (<http://www.midweeknews.com/articles/2016/11/14/5eacd828c614402da8ed3748bf4e46dd/index.xml?t=The+Great+Outdoors%3A+DeKalb+nonprofit+and+counseling+center+proving+that+adventure+works>)

“*Social Work Professor Receives Distinguished Researcher Award*” News article Anita Tucker’s award at the National AEE conference. (<https://www.unh.edu/unhtoday/2016/09/social-work-professor-receives-distinguished-researcher-award>)

## Other OBH news and awards:

Dr. Christine Norton received a **Fulbright** to Taiwan that will include teaching wilderness and adventure therapy at National Taiwan Normal University

Dr. Christine Norton received Texas State University College of Applied Arts **Award for Excellence in Teaching** and the **Award for Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activities** for 2016.

Dr. Christine Norton was named a **Student Conservation Association National Advisory Board Member** where she created and implemented pilot mental health response training for staff from the Student Conservation Association, a non-profit whose mission is to build the next generation of conservation leaders and inspire lifelong stewardship of the environment and communities by engaging young people in hands-on service to the land in West Springfield, MA in 2016.

Ellen Behrens is a **Chief Editor for the *Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs***, which recently published Volume IX devoted to clinical innovations in the field.

Dr. Anita Tucker was recently selected to join the Association for Experiential Education’s (AEE) **Board of Directors** in the position of Member at Large (<http://www.aee.org/board-of-directors>)

Dr. Michael Gass was presented with AEE’s Therapeutic Adventure Professional Group (TAPG) **2016 Heart of Adventure Therapy Award** given in October in Minneapolis, MN at the Annual AEE International Conference.

Dr. Anita Tucker recently received the **Distinguished Research Award** from the Association for Experiential Education (AEE) given in Minneapolis, MN at the AEE International Conference (<http://www.aee.org/distinguished-researcher-award>).

**Please visit us on our website:**  
[www.obhcenter.org](http://www.obhcenter.org)