**MAIN SPEAKERS**

**Kelly Hendershot**

* Kelly Hendershot is an assistant professor at Minot State University where she teaches business law and professional ethics courses. Kelly earned her juris doctorate from the University of North Dakota and has practiced law in North Dakota since 2010.

**Tamara Waters-Wheeler**

* Tamara is a school psychologist for Morton Sioux SPED Unit, in Mandan, ND. She is also an adjunct instructor for the MiSU School Psychology Graduate Program and University of Mary Special Education Graduate Program. As well, Tamara teaches a variety of Professional Development courses for North Dakota United including topics such as trauma, behavior, Native American Culture and LGBQT student support. Tamara has had the honor of obtaining her Phase 1 and Phase 2 Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics under the tutelage of Dr. Bruce Perry and the Neurosequential Network. Tamara has an Ed.S. in School Psychology from MiSU and is a Nationally Certified School Psychologist. She has a Bachelor's in Social Work from MiSU, a Bachelors in Addiction Studies from MiSU and a Graduate Certificate in Autism Studies from UND. Tamara enjoys working with students with behaviors/trauma on a daily basis. Tamara is also the proud mother of two grown daughters and is a dog mom to Sanderson.

**Michael Nason**

* Michael Nason has served in a variety of law enforcement and academic positions during his career. He served 3 ½ years as a Correctional Officer and Correctional Supervisor with the Ward County Sheriff’s Department, 5 ½ years as a Police Officer and Detective with the Bismarck Police Department, and 15 years as a Special Agent with the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation (NDBCI). In addition, Michael served as the Task Force Coordinator of the Metro Area Narcotics Task Force in Bismarck. Michael worked 3 years as a Parole/Probation Officer with the North Dakota Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation (DOCR) and 5 years as an administrative Captain with the Ward County Sheriff's Department. During his 37 years as a North Dakota licensed peace officer, Michael has accumulated nearly 4,000 hours of law enforcement training.

During his time as a NDBCI Special Agent, his duties included serving as a law enforcement instructor at the North Dakota Law Enforcement Training Academy. Michael is a graduate of both the Drug Enforcement Administration School and the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy. Michael has more than 20 years of criminal justice teaching experience. Michael has served as an adjunct criminal justice instructor for Minot State University, the University of Mary, United Tribes Technical College, and Bismarck State College. Michael holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in Criminal Justice from Minot State University. Michael is a licensed peace officer and a law enforcement instructor in the State of North Dakota. Michael's areas of research interest are sentencing disparity, issues impacting indigenous people, and police recruitment, screening, and retention. Michael's areas of expertise are criminal investigation, statement analysis, probation and parole, and police management.

**PANEL SPEAKERS**

**Alannah Valenta**

* Alannah Valenta is a Nationally Certified School Psychologist, working with Sheyenne Valley Special Education Unit (serving Valley City, Oakes, Barnes County North). She was the first School Psychologist in this special education unit, which now has two practitioners serving needs across multiple areas of expertise. She is the current Past President of the North Dakota Association of School Psychologists, having served on the executive board for 6.5 years. She is passionate about student advocacy, systems change, and educator well-being. She has firsthand experience with the effects of burnout, leading to advocacy for additional team members and implementation of self-care routines, time management strategies, and work boundaries. Outside of her professional work, she is a farmer's wife and mom, finding joy in supporting the family farm, reading, and traveling.

**Aaron Moss**

* Aaron Moss has been a licensed Peace Officer in North Dakota for 23 years and is a part time Deputy Sheriff with the Bottineau County Sheriff’s Office. Aaron is also retired from the Minot Police Department, where he served as a Patrol Officer in the Patrol Division then as the Community Outreach Officer in the Administrative Division. Aaron also previously served as a part time Patrol Officer with the Velva Police Department and as a Correctional Officer with the Ward County Jail. For the past 15 years, Aaron has been a North Dakota POST Board certified Law Enforcement instructor, and has received specialized instructor certifications including: Field Training Officer (Kaminsky, Sullenberger & Associates), Defensive Driving Instructor (National Safety Council), Domestic Violence Instructor Training Program (Department of Homeland Security - Federal Law Enforcement Training Center), Crisis Intervention Team Instructor (Minnesota Crisis Intervention Team Association), and De-escalation Instructor Course (Blue Shield Tactical Systems). He also taught “Crime Prevention and Fear Reduction” at the North Dakota Law Enforcement Training Academy for seven and half years. Aaron has authored NDPOST training courses in the areas of Search and Seizure, and Ethics for Law Enforcement.

Aaron is currently the Veterans Outreach Program Specialist for the Vet Center in Minot, North Dakota. He is responsible for outreach programing in a fifteen-county area covering Northwest and Northcentral North Dakota with the responsibility of ensuring qualified veterans are aware of their eligibly for Readjustment Counseling Services. Aaron also works with other federal, tribal, and state organizations, business, and nonprofit stakeholders who provide various veteran services for appropriate services referrals. Aaron also previously held certification as a Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Victim Advocate and was employed as the Rural Services Coordinator for the Domestic Violence Crisis Center in Minot, responsible for the supervision of rural service provision a four-county area surrounding Minot. Aaron is an eight-year veteran of the US Air Force and US Air Force Reserve where he served in Security Forces as a Military Working Dog Handler. Aaron was deployed to Riyadh Air Base, Saudi Arabia during Operation Southern Watch and was mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom after 9/11. He holds an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Criminal Justice, awarded in 2002 by the Community College of the Air Force.

**Vicki Michels**

* Vicki Michels, Ph.D. received her doctorate degree from the University of Wyoming in clinical psychology and her bachelor of arts majoring in psychology from Minot State University. She is a licensed psychologist and professor. She has been teaching at Minot State since 2001. She served as the president of the International Coalition for Addiction Studies Education, the president of the North Dakota Board of Addiction Counselor Examiners, Chair of the National Addiction Studies Accreditation Commission Board, and co-coordinator for the Minot Out of the Darkness Community Walk. Dr. Michels has collaborated with other faculty on research studying the mental health and addiction disorders of women prisoners, psychopharmacology, the North Dakota foster care placement, medical error prevention program effectiveness, exercise and cognition, and post traumatic growth.

**Dale Plessas**

* Moved to Minot from Montana in 1994 to attend Minot State University.
* Graduated from Minot State University in 1998
* Started my LE Career with the Grand Forks PD
* Moved to Minot and started with the Minot PD in 2001
* Served on the Bomb Squad for 17 years. Served as the commander for 6 of those years
* Appointed as a Shift Commander in 2018
* Became the Investigations Commander in 2020
* Was appointed Acting Chief in September of 2024