



## Heidi Barcus, Esq.

Attorney at Law  
Lewis Thomason, P.C.

For 30 years, Heidi Barcus has represented hospitals, physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals in healthcare liability matters. She represents providers working in correctional care both in jails and prisons from Mountain City to Memphis, Tennessee. She is licensed in Tennessee and Kentucky and has successfully defended regional and local health care facilities, medical practices, long-term care facilities, and insurance companies in state and federal court. Ms. Barcus is certified as a specialist in Medical Professional Liability by the American Board of Professional Liability Attorneys. She has tried numerous matters to verdict at all trial levels of Tennessee and Kentucky courts. She practices in the federal and state courts of both Tennessee and Kentucky, as well as all appellate courts of each state. Ms. Barcus previously served as an adjunct professor at the University of Tennessee College of Law.

Ms. Barcus is uniquely qualified to counsel her clients, having served as a litigator in the courtroom and as in-house counsel. Before joining the firm, Ms. Barcus served as staff attorney and assistant general counsel at the University of Tennessee Medical Center, a Level VI trauma center, where she directed the day-to-day legal services of the hospital and advised the hospital administration on health care liability, HIPAA, and employment law.



## Dr. Melissa S Caldwell, Ph.D., CCHP-MH/A

President  
Freedom Behavioral Health, Inc.

Dr. Caldwell is an award-winning clinical-forensic psychologist with over 20 years of correctional expertise. She currently leads a team of Qualified Mental Health Professionals (QMHPs) across 22 states as the President of Freedom Behavioral Health, Inc. She demonstrates mastery in her specialty through dual NCCHC certification as a Certified Correctional Professional in Mental Health (CCHP-MH) and Advanced Certification as a Certified Correctional Healthcare Professional (CCHP-A).

Dr. Caldwell started in corrections almost thirty years ago as a front-line correctional officer and became a licensed psychologist in 2005. This led her to mental health research, strengthening community partnerships, and providing direct patient care. This range affords her the invaluable ability to advise on successful patient-centered solutions and in the corrections environment and beyond. Additionally, she has partnered with multiple facilities and construction organizations as a consultant on suicide preventative architecture.

Dr. Caldwell is frequently requested and as an expert witness on forensic cases relating to behavioral health issues in jails and detention facilities. She serves on several committees whose mission is to improve the quality of mental health care in correctional and forensic settings and has collaborated with the National Institute of Mental Health in the development of suicide screening and assessment tools for detention facilities.

In 2015, Dr. Caldwell founded the Critical Incident Employee Rapid Response (CIERR) program and has been leading the industry in developing other professional wellness initiatives. This program offers confidential peer support to correctional officers and has expanded to serve law enforcement and first responders. From 2015 to 2023, the number of CIERR contacts has more than doubled year over year with over 1,000 contacts in 2023.

In 2021, Dr. Caldwell was awarded Advanced Correctional Healthcare's PIC Award, a "core values award" voted on by the entire Advanced Correctional Healthcare team and awarded to an individual who demonstrates the utmost dedication to professionalism, integrity, and commitment. Then in 2022, Dr. Caldwell received the prestigious Edward A. Award of Excellence in Correctional Health Care Leadership from the National Commission on Correctional Health Care. This award is presented to an individual who leads by example, inspires others, and is committed to quality improvement in correctional health care.

Dr. Caldwell is an exceptionally skilled public speaker with extensive experience from group officer training at the site level up to inspiring large audiences on national stages across the country.



## **Sheriff Ana Franklin (Retired), CCHP**

Program Consultant  
Advanced Correctional Healthcare, Inc.

Ana Franklin has spent over 25 years in law enforcement prior to her retirement in 2019. Throughout her career, she worked in corrections, K9, Patrol, CID, Special Victims, IPAC, undercover vice and narcotics, narcotics agent, agent assigned to Gulf Coast HIDTA – and later served on the Board of Directors. She has been declared an expert witness in clandestine labs and methamphetamine production and has served on the state of Alabama Attorney General's Task Force. Ana was promoted to lead investigator in the Special Victims Unit where she worked the most difficult, but most rewarding cases – crimes against families and children. She was declared an expert witness in Alabama's sex offender Law and child sexual molestation and exploitation.

In 2011, Ana was sworn in as the only female sheriff in Alabama, and one of only 29 females holding the office in the country at the time. She was in command of over 200 employees and responsible for a jail, which prior to her retirement, housed over 700 inmates, including 100 federal inmates housed for the US Marshall's and 5 municipalities. She served on numerous state and national law enforcement committees and boards. she is a graduate of NSA NSI, NSI National Leadership Program and the Southern Police Institute Command Staff and Leadership Certification.

Ana Served 2 terms as Sheriff before her retirement. One of her most important accomplishments was to successfully fight for federal oversight, via a 26-year consent decree, removed from her jail. Ana worked with her staff to restructure the healthcare program in the facility, ensuring that inmates were treated with constitutionally sound medical and mental healthcare. After over 2 years of court proceedings, a federal judge ruled in favor of lifting the consent decree which had been initiated due to inhumane, unsafe, and deplorable conditions within the jail.

In 2021, Ana joined ACH with a goal of supporting sheriffs and jail staff in providing sound inmate medical and mental health care, officer wellness programs, and valuable officer training. In 2022, Ana was awarded the Program Consultant of the Year Award by ACH for her commitment to meeting and exceeding goals as well as her ability to solve problems for jails across the southeastern United States.



## **Diana Knapp, MS, CCE, CJM**

Director, AJA Board Member  
Jackson County Detention Center, Kansas City, MO

Diana's career in criminal justice spans nearly three decades and includes work with adult and juvenile offenders in secure settings and in the community across state, federal and municipal levels. She holds an undergraduate degree in history/secondary education and a graduate degree in Criminal Justice Administration. She has devoted her life to a career in public safety that has spanned the municipal, state, and federal levels.

She began her career with the Missouri Department of Corrections as a probation and parole officer in Kansas City, eventually being promoted to managing the district probation and parole office in Boone County, Missouri. Diana's journey has included work as an institutional parole officer and case manager, unit manager, and assistant superintendent at an adult male facility.

Upon returning to Kansas City, Diana opened a juvenile residential program for delinquent youth aging out of foster care in Kansas, followed by managing a grant funded mental health program for municipal inmates in Kansas City diagnosed with mild to moderate mental health concerns. From there, she managed a federally contracted halfway house for adult offenders, then transitioned to manage the juvenile residential and detention centers for the Jackson County Family Court.

Diana returned to the Jackson County Detention Center as the Deputy Director in late 2017 and was appointed Director in March of 2018. Over the past five years, she has committed herself to improving the culture of her team, reducing workplace injury, and improving outcomes for those incarcerated in her facility.

Diana is a nationally recognized speaker and has graced the stages of the American Correctional Association (ACA), American Jail Association (AJA), National Sheriffs Association (NSA), and the International Association for Correctional Training Professionals (IACTP) in addition to others. She is passionate about education, leadership development, and giving back to the corrections industry. In 2021, Diana was elected to the AJA Board of Directors, and was re-elected in 2022. This governing body is responsible for national policy development as well as implementation plans



## **Matt Shults, CCHP**

Director of Business Development & Client Services  
Advanced Correctional Healthcare, Inc.

Matt has nearly 30 years of experience in law enforcement and jail operations including the last four years as an expert problem solver in the specialty of correctional health care. He is a Certified Correctional Healthcare Professional (CCHP) and is currently pursuing a degree in business. Matt oversees a nationwide team of Program Consultants spanning over 350 county jails across 21 states.

Matt began his law enforcement career in 1998 as a part-time dispatcher. In 1999, he was hired as a full-time jail officer, working in the Phelps County Sheriff's Department in his hometown of Rolla, Missouri. During that time, Phelps County's 38 bed jail employed 5 total employees. In 2003, Matt was promoted to the rank of Sergeant, and a move was made into a new, 200 bed jail facility with 35 dedicated jail staff. In 2005, Matt was promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant, and served as the Assistant Jail Administrator until 2008 when he became the Jail Administrator.

During his service to Phelps County from 2005 to 2019, Matt negotiated a federal contract to house USMS prisoners, oversaw jail training, policy and procedure development, and supervised the jail's emergency response team. He served on Missouri's Jail Training and Standards Committee in collaboration with the Missouri Sheriff's Association, and trained jail officers throughout the state of Missouri.

In 2015, Matt received the Missouri Jail Administrator of The Year award. In 2022, Matt received Advanced Correctional Healthcare's PIC Award for demonstrating the utmost dedication to professionalism, integrity, and commitment. Through his expertise in jail operations, Matt scales his training from site-specific up to the national stage while maintaining credibility and relevance.



## **Honey Sternberg, MS, LPC, TF-CBT, CCHP**

Regional Behavioral Health Manager, Certified Mental Health First Aid Instructor  
Freedom Behavioral Health, Inc.

Honey Sternberg is a qualified mental health professional (QMHP) with a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a master's degree in Professional Counseling. She is certified in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy and has worked with individuals who have serious mental illness and trauma as well as community wrap around programing. Honey also maintains certification as a Certified Correctional Health Care Professional (CCHP). She has worked to facilitate suicide awareness and educate law enforcement, first responders, and community groups for the past 9 years.

Honey's correctional expertise goes far beyond her own profession. She has been the wife of a correctional officer for the past 22 years and has experienced first-hand the impact of the profession on the individual officer and their family. She has worked in corrections for the past 5 years with a focus on critical response, mental health court, staff training, and individual/group therapy. She has served as a primary contact for the Critical Incident Employee Rapid Response (CIERR) program for the past 2 years and was recently promoted to a Regional Behavioral Health Manager for Freedom Behavioral Health, Inc.

Honey has an inherent belief that every person can make changes in their lives. However, she recognizes that not everyone has access to the skills and tools that are needed to do so. Bringing mental health services into correctional facilities and speaking on the Spark Training stage gives her the opportunity to provide access to these tools.



## **Melanie Stroda, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC, CCHP**

Clinical Education Director  
Advanced Correctional Healthcare, Inc.

Melanie Stroda is a nurse practitioner with over 30 years of health care experience in various nursing and practitioner specialties including long term care, home health, acute medical surgical, hospice, critical care, and education. She is an experienced simulation specialist with over 15 years of experience developing and evaluating real-life training through practical exercises and supportive technology. Melanie maintains certification as a Certified Correctional Health Care Professional (CCHP) and is a certified Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) instructor with the American Heart Association.

Melanie has 10 years of experience in correctional medicine and has served as a site practitioner for over 40 jails across 5 states at any given time. Her passion for vulnerable populations coupled with her experience in education has led to her growth within ACH as a mentor to new practitioners entering the correctional specialty and being promoted to Clinical Education Director.

Melanie has a great interest in meeting the needs of patients with mental health difficulties and substance use disorders and continues to pursue specialized education to support the care of these patients. She is currently pursuing her doctoral degree in nursing with a focus on psychiatric services.

Moving into a clinical education leadership role allows her to oversee the training programs offered to practitioners and nurses across the county as well as design innovative and experiential learning as a presenter. Her training is scalable from facility-specific up to the national level.