



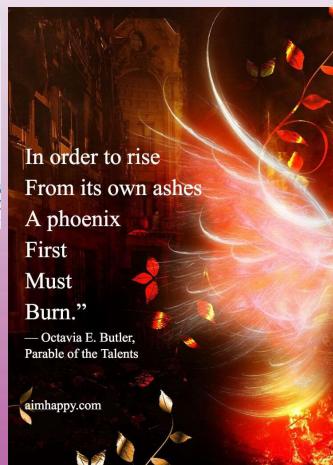
The Armstrong Center for Hope

Psychological and Spiritual Wellness for All Ages



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Rising of the Phoenix

No matter how many times you have experienced pain,
Fight to rise from your ashes.
Win your hope back, soak up all the good thoughts and channel them
onto love.
You are a phoenix.
Your heart deserves to bloom again.
Fight.

Alexander Vasiliu
Author of Blooming

The Phoenix is a mythical bird described by the ancient Egyptians and Greeks, symbolizing renewal and rebirth. Legend states that a Phoenix has a lifespan of 500 years. Just before the Phoenix dies, it builds a nest and sets itself on fire, resulting in the rising of a new Phoenix from the ashes.

2020, what a year! A year of uncertainties, heightened fear, pain, loss of loved ones, the year it felt like the earth stood still. In 2020, the world faced the COVID pandemic, the death of prominent public figures: John Lewis, Ruth Ginsburg, Kobe Bryant, and Chadwick Boseman. We must not forget the death of George Floyd and so many other black and brown people at the hands of the police, with systemic racism in the forefront for all to witness firsthand. 2020 also faced its fair share of historical events, including the election of our very first African American female Vice President, Kamala Harris, and the dawn of a new Administration. 2020 was a remarkable year of victories and defeat. Yet still, we rise! Like the Phoenix rising from the ashes, we made it to 2021. As we enter the second half of the year, one could only wonder... what is next? What will these next six months bring?

As I begin to reflect on these past six months, my mind is consumed with so many thoughts, yet gratitude is what I feel the most. My family faced a house fire that caused us to be displaced in the first month of the new year. Was this a sign of how my 2021 was going to be? The struggle was REAL! Struggles of guilt, fear...so many uncertainties. Struggles with depression, anxiety, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Why me? Why us? Now what? What if? All the should've, would've, could've. I experienced every emotion known to man. Not only did I have my own emotions to deal with but the emotions of my family. What are they feeling? How can I help them? I need to be available to them and place "me" on hold. The more I put me on hold, the deeper I fell into a hole!

As a result of the fire, we received overwhelming support from our village and strangers near and far. Who were these strangers? Where did they come from? Despite losing so much, we gained even more. I was beyond grateful. Grateful for family and friends. Grateful for the support and prayers. Grateful for the love but most of all grateful that everyone was safe, and we were all together.

Rising from the ashes...like the Phoenix, I am rising from the ashes. Life brings uncertainties. Life brings pain, distress, loss, but we must fight. Fight for hope. Fight to have good thoughts. Fight to love through it all. I learned through this tragedy that it is okay to ask and receive help. It is okay to not be okay. When life begins to feel overwhelming, it is okay to seek help and talk to someone about what you are feeling, what you are going through. It IS okay to NOT be okay.

Welcoming Our New Staff



Kayla Chavis, B.A Psychology Intern

Kayla Chavis was born in Dayton, Ohio and has resided in Raleigh, North Carolina since 1997. In the Spring of 2018, Ms. Chavis graduated from North Carolina Central University and received her B.A in Psychology. During her time there, Ms. Chavis worked alongside Dr. Christopher Edwards as a junior researcher. She currently attends North Carolina Central University and is working on the completion of her Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology. Ms. Chavis is a member of the Golden Key Honors Society. She serves as secretary of the Shayla Marie Chavis Scholarship Fund Inc. in honor of her late sister. In her spare time, she also serves as a writer with the Classical Voices of NC Arts Journal. In her time as an intern at The Armstrong Center for Hope, she aspires to gain knowledge through practice and help others.

Her hobbies include: Music Production and Photography.

Mariana Glenn-Toland Client Care Coordinator



Mariana Glenn-Toland is an alumna of the College of Charleston where she received her B.S. in Psychology with a minor in Crime, Law, and Society. Mariana was a native of South Carolina until 2021, when she relocated to Durham, NC. Mariana has a passion for serving as an educated and equipped mental health advocate.

In her free time, Mariana enjoys practicing yoga, reading, and listening to audiobooks.

Melanie Melton, LMFT, M.Div



Melanie Melton earned her B.S. in Family Community Services from East Carolina University in 2007. She then earned her M.A. in Marriage and Family Therapy from Appalachian State University in 2009. Melanie later earned her Master of Divinity degree at Shaw University School of Divinity in 2021. Melanie holds an North Carolina Marriage and Family Therapy License. Melanie is also an Ordained Minister, being ordained in 2017. Melanie has provided therapy, beginning with providing volunteer crisis counseling since 2005. She has provided crisis counseling, individual, couples, family, and group therapy. She holds certifications and provides trauma-informed therapy, including EMDR and TF-CBT, as appropriate. She has also served as a Chaplain Intern within a local hospital, providing pastoral care including prayer, supportive services, and leading Sunday Worship services. Melanie has created and provides training and workshops for adults, related to crib to prison pipeline, child abuse, trauma, foster care, adoption, grief, loss, and healing. Melanie currently works with ages 8 and up, addressing issues including: Depression, Anxiety, PTSD, Grief and Loss, Trauma, Foster Care, Adoption, Coping Skills, Improving Relationships, Perfectionism, Personal Growth, Life Transitions, Self-Esteem, Social Skills, Spiritual/Religious Concerns, Work/Life Balance.

Most importantly, Melanie serves out of love and devotion to Jesus Christ, with the foundational scripture always in mind, "He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God was there for us" (2 Corinthians 1:4).

Three ways to Improve Sleep habits

1. Sleep Schedule. Maintaining a consistent sleep schedule is important to creating healthy sleeping habits. Doing so, allows for your body to better reinforce the sleep-wake cycle. Try to create no more than one hour differences in the time that you sleep and wake each day.



2. Create a restful sleep environment. Limit use of electronic devices and screens that emit light when time for bed. A dark room is best for enhancing sleep. White noise/rain sounds are helpful tools to induce a more relaxed state.



3. Increase Physical Activity. Exercise can tire the body out and improve sleep habits. Be careful to avoid exercise close to bed time as it can make it more difficult to sleep.

Community Events

Wednesdays at the Well: **Wednesdays at the Well** is a consultation group for therapists and trainees interested in integrating spirituality into mental health practice. The group meets virtually on 4th Wednesdays from 12:00 to 12:55. Request the session link at tarmstrong@armstrongcfh.com.

“Good life-Health and Wellness Monthly Online Series” Presented by The Brenneis-Boger for Long-Term Survivors at GMHC on Sunday., July 11th, from 4:00PM to 5:30PM. Register online at [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)

“Family Compassionate Conversations: Community Wellness” Friday August 13th from 3:00pm-4:00 pm by New England MHTTC. This event is online. Registration is located at www.eventbrite.com

“Essential Wellness 101” Presented by Propping Up Recovery on Monday., August 30th, at 7:00PM. This event is online and registration can be completed at [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)

“Mental Health and a Post-Pandemic Workforce,” Presented by The Village Family Service Center on Wednesday., September 8th, from 1:00pm to 2:00pm. See [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) for registration. This event is online.



About Our Organization:

Welcome to The Armstrong Center for Hope, an interdisciplinary mental health practice for children, adolescents, adults, couples, families, groups, and organizations. Our theoretical approaches include Cognitive-Behavioral, Family Systems, Psychodynamic, and Eclectic styles. Psychoeducational and personality testing are available resources at the ACFH as well. We currently accept several insurance plans, including Aetna, BlueCross BlueShield, Cigna, Magellan, and Medicaid. We also offer sliding scale rates to fit almost any budget. In addition to daytime appointments, some evening and weekend appointments are available. Our current hours are: Monday-Thursday, 8 am to 8 pm / Fridays, 8 am to 5 pm Call for an appointment today at (919) 418-1718 or e-mail us at acfinfo@armstrongcfh.com. During COVID-19, all psychotherapy and some testing appointments are held virtually in a secure telehealth environment. Face-to-face testing will be scheduled on a case-by-case basis.



The Armstrong Center for Hope
Psychological and Spiritual Wellness for All Ages

OUR CLINICAL INTERESTS

INCLUDE:

- Stress Management • Wellness
- Consultations • Depression • Trauma, including EMDR • Anxiety • Grief and Loss • Anger Management • Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) •
- Behavior Disorders • Learning Disabilities • Parenting • Marriage, Family, and Relationship Issues •
- African-American Concerns • Religious and Spiritual Concerns • Women's Issues
- Conflict in the Workplace • Mind/Body Connection

OUR CLINICAL STAFF:

Tonya D. Armstrong, Ph.D., M.T.S., LP

LoveN'der Avent-Alston, BA, MAT

Kristen V. Bell-Adair, Ph.D., LP

Kayla Chavis, B.A.

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Sherry C. Eaton, Ph.D., LP

Clifton D. Garner, Sr., M.S.

Natalie R. Gidney-Cole, MSW, LCSW

Melanie Melton, LMFT

Kim Nichols, MA, LMFTA

Patricia Noel, MSW, LCSWA, LCASA

Jesus A. Sanchez Ohep, MT, MA, LPA

Marissa Stanziani, Ph.D.

Milicia Tedder, Ph.D., LPA

Reggie Wilson, MSW, LCSWA

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A Word From Our Founder & CEO



As Licensed Clinical Social Worker Trish Noel reminds us in our cover article, the phoenix is a symbol of renewal and rebirth. After all we have been through in the midst of this polypandemic, what better time than now for us to hone in on where we need renewal the most. For some of us, the “Covid 15” (or more) means that our shifting lifestyles (e.g., less mobility, decreased access to gyms and intentional physical activity, greater access to our kitchens, desire for comfort foods) may have resulted in unwanted weight gain. In this context, renewal might mean re-examining any less healthful habits we’ve acquired and rolling them back through a newly established workout schedule, preparing more whole foods, and connecting with gentle accountability partners who can help us stay on track. For others, renewal might be most effective in the social realm.

Many of our relationships (both within and outside of quarantine) have taken a hit. Perhaps social media and virtual platforms like Zoom were your saving graces, keeping you from the brink of complete alienation. Maybe you even forged some new relationships as our regular routines were disrupted. However, now that vaccinations are up and the vaccines themselves show a stronger and stronger track record of efficacy, we can pursue relationships in a more intentional, tangible, and grateful way. Finally, living through Covid itself is an occasion for spiritual renewal.

There is something significant that stands before us, something so spectacular that it requires a power greater than ourselves to bring it to fruition. We survived and are called to a higher level of living on purpose. In the midst of the increasing busyness that accompanies our society’s return to a modicum of normalcy, spiritual renewal means taking the time to listen out for, indeed, to pursue that “still, small voice” that resonates with the reason we were born. Move, connect, and listen to ignite your rebirth!