

# 39th Annual Gravens Conference

On the Environment of Care for  
High Risk Newborns and Their Families

**June 15-18, 2026**

***“Sensitive Issues in Sensational Times”***

**Monday, June 15th**  
**Let the Festivities Begin!**

TIME	SESSION / EVENT	LOCATION
8:00 pm-4:00 pm	Reimagining the NICU - Troy Savage <i>Optional Pre Conference with Separate Registration</i>	
4:00 pm-7:00 pm	Registration Desk Open	
7:00 pm-9:00 pm	Welcome Reception <i>Cash Bar Only</i>	Podium at Embassy Suites

## Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> Science & Application

*Welcome, Breaks, Awards, and Closing Do Not Count for CME/CE*

TIME	SESSION / EVENT	LOCATION
7:00 am-5:00 pm	Registration Desk Open	
7:00 am-8:00 am	Continental Breakfast Provided (1 hour)	

**8:00 am-5:00 pm**

**Plenary Sessions**

**Downes Ballroom - Corbett Family Hall**

**Moderator: (Robert White and Joy Browne)**

TIME	SESSION / EVENT	PRESENTER
8:00 am-8:15 am	Welcome & Introductions	Joy Browne
8:15 am-9:00 am	Family-Centered Collaborative Care Models that Support Families and Optimize Preterm Infant and Child Health Outcomes	Jessica DiBari
9:00 am-9:45 am	Care of the Mother is Care for the Baby	Heather Burris

**9:45 am-10:15 am**

**Break (30 min)**

10:15 am-11:00 am	Central Autonomic Network Connectivity is Altered in an Extra-Uterine Environment	Catherine Limperopoulos
11:00 am-11:45 am	All Care is Brain Care: Lessons learned from an international quality improvement collaborative to improve brain health and outcomes (Part 1)	Roger Soll, Elizabeth Rogers, Sonia Bonifacio

**11:45 am-1:00 pm**

**Lunch (75 min)**

1:00 pm-2:30 pm	All Care is Brain Care: Lessons learned from an international quality improvement collaborative to improve brain health and outcomes (Part 2)	Roger Soll, Elizabeth Rogers, Sonia Bonifacio
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**2:30 pm-3:00 pm**

**Break (30 min)**

3:00 pm-3:30 pm	Gravens Recognition Award Presentation	Mitch Goldstein
3:30 pm-4:15 pm	Sensitive Issues for Babies, Parents, and their Relationships	Joy Browne

4:15 pm-4:45 pm	Panel Discussion Among NICU Parents on Real-World Impact of Topics Presented	Molly Fraust-Wylie, Susanne Klawetter, Alex Zavala
4:45 pm-5:00 pm	Family Centered-Care (FCC) Scholars Introduction	Malathi Balasundaram
5:00 pm-5:15 pm	Final Thoughts and Take-Home Messages	Robert White
<b>6:30 pm-8:30 pm</b> <b>Reception &amp; Poster Walk</b> <b>Poster Session - Jordan Hall Galleria</b> <i>Substantial Snacks Provided</i> 7:00 pm-7:45 pm, Poster Authors Available 8:10 pm-8:30 pm, Door Prize Raffle: Vincent C. Smith		

<b>Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Themed Tracks</b> <i>Welcome, Breaks, and Closing Do Not Count for CME/CE</i>			
TIME	SESSION / EVENT	LOCATION	
6:30 am-7:15 am	Run, Walk, Skip Around Notre Dame Campus		
7:00 am-8:00 am	Continental Breakfast Provided / Networking Tables (1 hour)		
7:30 am-1:30 pm	Registration Desk Open		
<b>8:00 am-1:00 pm</b> <b>Themed Tracks</b>			
<b>Track A</b> <b>Infant and Family-Centered Developmental Care</b> <b>Jordan Hall Room 101</b> <b>Moderator: Joy Browne</b>		<b>Track B</b> <b>Newborn ICU Design</b> <b>Jordan Hall Room 105</b> <b>Moderator: Robert White</b>	
8:00 am-8:15 am	Introductions & Announcements	8:00 am-8:15 am	Introductions & Announcements
8:15 am-8:45 am	The Importance of a Developmental Point of View of Sensory Processes - Robert Lickliter	8:15 am-9:00 am	Therapeutic Design - Mardelle Shepley
8:45 am-9:30 am	Clinical Application from Chemosensory Research - Julie Mennella	9:00 am-9:45 am	Designing NICU Spaces for Ritual and Healing - Anya Vanacek and Julia Jude
9:30 am-10:15 am	Development and Clinical Application from Auditory Tactile Research - Nathalie Maitre	9:45 am-10:30 am	Soundscapes - Bobbi Pineda
10:15 am-10:45 am	Break (30 min)		
		10:30 am-11:00 am	Break (30 min)
10:45 am-11:30 am	Development and Clinical Application from Embodied Vocal Presence Research - Manuela Filippa	<i>Exhibitors to Break Down</i>	
11:30 am-12:15 pm	Reflections on Sensory Developmental Ecology and Its Applications for Care - Jeff Alberts	11:00 am-11:45 am	New Unit Presentation - Alli Kasper, Brianna Leigh, and Karizma Maxson
12:15 pm-12:45 pm	Clinical Application of the Environment of Care from the NICU Parents' Perspective – Jessica DiBari, Mia Malcolm, Jessi Barnes	11:45 am-12:45 pm	Using AI for NICU Design - Troy Savage

12:45 pm-1:00 pm	Summary & Next Steps - Joy Browne	12:45 pm-1:00 pm	Summary & Next Steps - Robert White
<b>1:00 pm-4:00 pm</b> <b>Lunch, Rest, Play, Network, NICU Tour</b> <i>Lunch Not Provided</i>			
<b>Tour of the Beacon Children's Couplet Care/Single Family Room NICU</b>			
<b>4:00 pm-4:45 pm</b> <b>Welcome Back &amp; Networking</b> <i>Coffee and Light Snacks Provided</i>			
<b>4:45 pm-6:00 pm</b> <b>Workshops (75 min)</b>			
TIME	SESSION / EVENT	MODERATOR	
4:45 pm-6:00 pm	A: Culture Club: Culture as a Foundation for Quality Improvement - Elizabeth Rogers and Sonia Bonifacio (Room: Jordan Hall 101)	<b>Mitch Goldstein</b>	
	B: Taking Steps Toward Postpartum Care in the NICU - Heather Burris and Katey Mari (Room: Jordan Hall 105)	<b>Morgan Kowalski</b>	
	C: Reimagining the NICU: Wrap Up - Troy Savage (Room: Jordan Hall 412)	<b>Robert White</b>	
	D: Are We Really Seeing Delirium in Babies? A Conversation About Behavioral Assessment and Intervention - Jeff Alberts (Room: Jordan Hall 310)	<b>Kathleen Kolberg</b>	
	E: Support for NICU Fathers and Non-Birthing Parents - Cameron Boyd, Alex Zavala, and Craig Garfield (Room: Jordan Hall 322)	<b>Molly Fraust-Wylie</b>	
	F: Partnering with NICU parents and professionals: Methodological lessons from developing the PATH program - Susanne Klawetter (Room: Jordan Hall 402/405)	<b>Mardelle Shepley</b>	
<b>6:30 pm-9:00 pm</b> <b>Dinner Banquet</b> <b>Heritage Hall - Joyce Center</b> <i>Included with Conference Registration</i>			

<b>Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Family Topics &amp; Reflections Abstracts &amp; Workshops</b> <i>Welcome, Breaks, and Closing Do Not Count for CME/CE</i>		
TIME	SESSION / EVENT	LOCATION
6:30 am-7:15 am	Run, Walk, Shuffle Around Notre Dame Campus	
7:00 am-8:00 am	Continental Breakfast Provided (1 hour)	
7:00 am-11:15 am	Registration Desk Open	
<b>8:00 am-12:00 pm</b> <b>Plenary Session</b> <b>Downes Ballroom - Corbett Family Hall</b> <b>Moderators: (Vincent C. Smith and Molly Fraust-Wylie)</b>		

8:00 am-8:10 am	Introductions and Announcements	Vincent C. Smith & Molly Fraust-Wylie
8:10 am-8:40 am	A NICU Dad's Perspective	Alex Zavala
8:40 am-9:15 am	Experiences of NICU Fathers and Non-Birthing Parents	Cameron Boyd
9:15 am-10:00 am	NICU Discharge Planning Considerations for NICU Fathers and Non-Birthing Parents	Craig Garfield
<b>10:00 am-10:30 am</b> <b>Break (30 min)</b>		
10:30 am-11:05 am	Audience Engagement Activity	Troy Savage
11:05 am-11:50 am	Parent Panel	Molly Fraust-Wylie & Mia Malcolm
11:50 am-12:00 pm	Acknowledgement & Celebration of Juneteenth Wrap Up/Warm Send Off	Joy Browne & Robert White
<b>12:00 pm-1:15 pm</b> <i>Planning Committee Meeting</i> <b>Lunch (75 min)</b>		
<b>1:15 pm-2:30 pm</b> <b>Abstracts (75 min)</b>		
<b>TIME</b>	<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>MODERATOR</b>
1:15 pm-2:30 pm	Developmental Care (Room: Jordan Hall 322): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parent-Delivered Neurodevelopmental Care: Standardizing an Approach to Parent Education - Grace King, Tierney Morrison, Aimee Godett, Marge Day, Emily Whitesel (Abstract 30)</li> <li>2. Interventions Designed to Improve the Postpartum Health and Wellbeing of Parents of Infants in the NICU: A Scoping Review - Sarah Verbiest, Wayne Price, Kimarie Bugg (Abstract 19)</li> <li>3. Multidisciplinary Journey to Reliable Social Determinants of Health Screening for NICU Families: Navigating Barriers in the NICU Village - Rosanne Buck, Dory Ziperstein, Molly Faust-Wylie, Erika Sevieri, Gina Story, Emily Whitesel, Yarden Fraiman (Abstract 7)</li> </ol>	<b>Vincent C. Smith</b>
	Family Support (A) (Room: Jordan Hall 101): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Harmonizing Developmental and Medical Communication in the NICU: A Dynamic Digital Platform to Augment Family-Centered Care - Ansul Asad, Yaya Ren, Bree Andrew (Abstract 36)</li> <li>2. Early Parental Presence in the NICU: Social Determinants and Maternal Mental Health Shape Family Engagement for High Risk Infants - Jaclyn Ruggiero, Allison Davidson (Abstract 47)</li> <li>3. Family-Centered Care: Increasing Positive Family Engagement and Interactions with Infants in the NICU - Terri Sandoval, Alison Smith, Jamie Lujan, Jennifer Guadalupe, Rachel Carlos, Candice Martinez (Abstract 4)</li> </ol>	<b>Malathi Balasundaram</b>
	Developmental Care/Family-Centered Care (Room: Jordan Hall 310): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Journey to a Developmental Care Continuum: An Interdisciplinary Collaborative Approach to Developmental Care</li> </ol>	<b>Molly Fraust-Wylie</b>

	<p>in the NICU - Tiara Bolden, Lisa Miller, Cynthia Ruggles, Mary Beth Sanders, Laura Schacht, Lindsay Schuler, Kelly Crombie, Janet Dierstein, Susannah Dillender, Christine Houlihan, Amy Salisbury (Abstract 51)</p> <p>2. Designing the NICU of the Future: National Survey Insights on Workforce Support, Digital Integration, and Family Partnership - Lisa Davenport, Jaylee Hilliard (Abstract 32)</p> <p>3. Reimagining the NICU Environment of Care: Applying Human Factors and Ergonomics to Support Safe, Sustained Skin-to-Skin (Kangaroo) Care for High Risk Infants and Families - Yamile Jackson (Abstract 6)</p>	
	<p>Family Support (B) (Room: Jordan Hall 105):</p> <p>1. Mapping Neonatal Transfer Patterns to Inform Family-Centered Care: Capacity and Distance Across Levels of Care - Amanda Luff, Emily Malloy, Veronica Fitzpatrick (Abstract 15)</p> <p>2. Advancing Family Engagement in the NICU: A Qualitative Exploration of Barriers and Facilitators - Laura Rose, Kayla Schmittau, Kristen Schaffer, Alejandro Chavez, Katherine Lopez-Lepe, Linda Franck, Henry Lee (Abstract 8)</p> <p>3. Effect of Parent Education Classes on Confidence and Stress of Parents of Infants Admitted to the NICU of a Tertiary Care Hospital in India - Pooja Dekhane, Puja Padbidri, Madhura Gandhi, Madhuri Patil, Eilish Byrne (Abstract 22)</p>	<b>Mia Malcom</b>
	<p>Potpourri (Room: Jordan Hall 412):</p> <p>1. Reaching NICU Families: Feasibility of Recruiting High Risk Infants - Ashlee Vance, Eman Dannaway (Abstract 33)</p> <p>2. Beyond Just Cuddles: Creating a Medical Student Cuddlers Program for an Evolving Level 4 NICU - Stephanie Bernard, Lauren Felzani, Rivky Barnetsky, Likhitha Patlolla, Jordan Bryan, Donessa Jenae Colley, Andrea Weintraub (Abstract 17)</p> <p>3. Development of a Conceptual Framework for Financial Hardship in Neonatal Care - Ashlee Vance (Abstract 26)</p>	<b>Joy Browne</b>
	<p>Design (Room: Jordan Hall 402/405):</p> <p>1. Acoustic Comfort in Newborn Intensive Care - Kathleen Philbin (Abstract 52)</p> <p>2. Beyond Single-Family Rooms: A Hybrid NICU Model Responsive to Community Demographics - Zoraya Stern, Maria D'Souza, Whitney K. Fuessel (Abstract 24)</p>	<b>Robert White</b>
<b>2:30 pm-3:00 pm</b>		
<b>Break (30 min)</b>		
<b>3:00 pm-4:15 pm</b>		
<b>Workshops (75 min)</b>		
3:00 pm-4:15 pm	A: Family-Centered Care in Action: Collaboration, Measurement, and Improvement- Malathi Balasundaram and Morgan Kowalski (Room: Jordan Hall 105)	<b>Malathi Balasundaram</b>
	B: Words Matter: Navigating Sensitive Situations with Intentional Language in the NICU - Ramya Kumar (Room: Jordan Hall 310)	<b>Judy Smith</b>
	C: Trauma-Informed Expectations for Gratitude in the NICU - Mia Malcolm and Jessica Barnes (Room: Jordan Hall 402/405)	<b>Mia Malcolm</b>

	D: D.R.I.V.E. Better Care: Developing Emotionally Present NICU Teams to Strengthen Family-Centered Care - Weston Brandon (Room: Jordan Hall 322)	<b>Mitch Goldstein</b>
	E: Relationships in the NICU: Will AI Foster or Hinder? - Jim Gray and Bridget Davern (Room: Jordan Hall 101)	<b>Vincent C. Smith</b>
	F: The Second Edition of the Infant and Family-Centered Developmental Care Standards: Discussion and Dissemination - Tiara Bolden, Carol Jaeger and Joy Browne (Room: Jordan Hall 412)	<b>Joy Browne</b>
4:15 pm	Safe Travels, See You at the Next Gravens Conference!	

**Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>**  
**HAPPY JUNETEENTH!**  
 \*Juneteenth is a United States federal holiday commemorating the end of slavery.\*