



# AMTC

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## News

It is our privilege to partner with SWK... The RMTAC will be an online forum and tool for service providers to build their effectiveness in caring for and finding resources for migrants and refugees.

ANGELA TURNER

### AMTC News

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## Building Capacity for Refugees and Migrants

Spring is often associated with new beginnings and growth. At AMTC & Associates, we are delighted to have embarked on an initiative with our newest client, Southwest Key Programs (SWK), that will greatly assist providers of refugee and migrant services. SWK is a leader in youth, family, and community wellness and support, spanning several states and impacting thousands of individuals per year. Its current programs and offerings are extensive, some of which are listed in our first article that briefly highlights this impressive organization (see page 2).

It is our privilege to partner with SWK as it continues to build capacity by implementing a Refugee and Migrant Behavioral Health Technical Assistance Center (RMTAC), funded by a grant through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Many health providers do not have the experience, resources, or know-how to fully support migrants and refugees, which is a population that faces significant health risks, including trauma. The RMTAC will be an online forum and tool for service providers to build their effectiveness

in caring for and finding resources for migrants and refugees, particularly in the area of behavioral health and wellness. AMTC will provide evaluation and data analysis for the RMTAC to measure its effectiveness. We invite you to learn more about this initiative in our second article (on page 3).

We are all invested in the success of this collaboration, and I am deeply committed to excellence for SWK and this highly impactful project. I encourage you to read on and learn about the extraordinary work SWK is doing. You can also hear directly from AMTC associates Brandon Osborn, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, and Salvador Dominguez, Ph.D., Research Associate, who share their insights on the importance of the RMTAC (see page 4).

Sincerely,

Angela Turner  
Principal



# Southwest Key MAKES A DIFFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES



AMTC is delighted to welcome **Southwest Key Programs (SWK)** as its newest client and is excited to work with this exceptional organization. It is one of the largest U.S. Latino-led nonprofit organizations, offering evidence-based programs and essential services to transform the lives of youth and their families.

To say that the organization's offerings are extensive is an understatement. Among them are Youth and Family Services, Unaccompanied Children's Programs, Workforce Development, Home Study and Post Release Services After Family Reunification, and Community Engagement. SWK maintains programs throughout several states, touching individuals and families throughout the nation.

Any focus on children is intricately connected to success within the framework of a family. In the realm of Youth and Family Services, for example, youth in the

criminal justice system not only receive structure and services to promote positive behaviors but also receive the benefits that come from family preservation and parenting support provided to their families. Also, SWK understands that families function within the contexts of school, home, and community and intentionally operates within them all. As an illustration, caseworkers partner with school staff to help with transitions back home from correctional facilities and connect families to community resources.

For children who arrive alone in the U.S., staff work to unify children with their families and/or vetted sponsors immediately upon arrival at SWK. Caseworkers reach out to parents, relatives, or prospective sponsors in the U.S., but that is only one aspect. SWK is involved every step of the way, from the moment a child steps onto its grounds to supporting families after reunification (known as "post-release"). Staff conduct individualized support plans, visit homes, and offer resources, such as educational, medical, and mental health programs. According to the SWK website ([southwestkey.org](http://southwestkey.org)), "In a typical year, our program helps over 2,500 families receive Post Release Services, enrolls 900 children in local schools, and assists

1,000 families with access to medical and mental health care."

AMTC will partner with SWK on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Refugee and Migrant Behavioral Health Technical Assistance Center Grant (see next article). AMTC Research Associate Salvador Dominguez, Ph.D., had this to say: "When we learned about SWK, we became impassioned. We felt a personal stake and motivation in this project given our personal experiences and the research we conducted in the area of refugee and migrant behavioral health."

## SOUTHWEST KEY PROGRAMS *Reach and Impact*

**Southwest Key Programs, Inc.**, is one of the largest Latino-led nonprofit organizations in the United States. Founded in 1987, SWK has been on the frontline of social justice, youth advocacy, immigration, and helping to nurture the hearts and minds of children, youth, and families.





# ELEVATING PROVIDER CAPACITY IN REFUGEE & MIGRANT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Well-being is multifaceted, involving not only physical health but also mental and emotional health. For refugees and migrants who have faced challenges such as gender-based and community violence, human trafficking, exposure to child abuse, natural disasters, forced displacement, and legal issues, behavioral health conditions are common, and access to resources is difficult to navigate.

Meeting behavioral health needs is further complicated by the fact that providers who serve refugees and migrants may lack the training, experience, or resources required to fully understand and treat this population. Partnerships and collaborative work among providers and partners can make all the difference in elevating provider knowledge and expertise.

This is where SWK is taking the lead. To grow provider capacity in meeting refugee and migrant behavioral health needs, SWK is implementing a Refugee and Migrant Behavioral Health Technical Assistance Center (RMTAC), which is funded by a grant from SAMHSA.

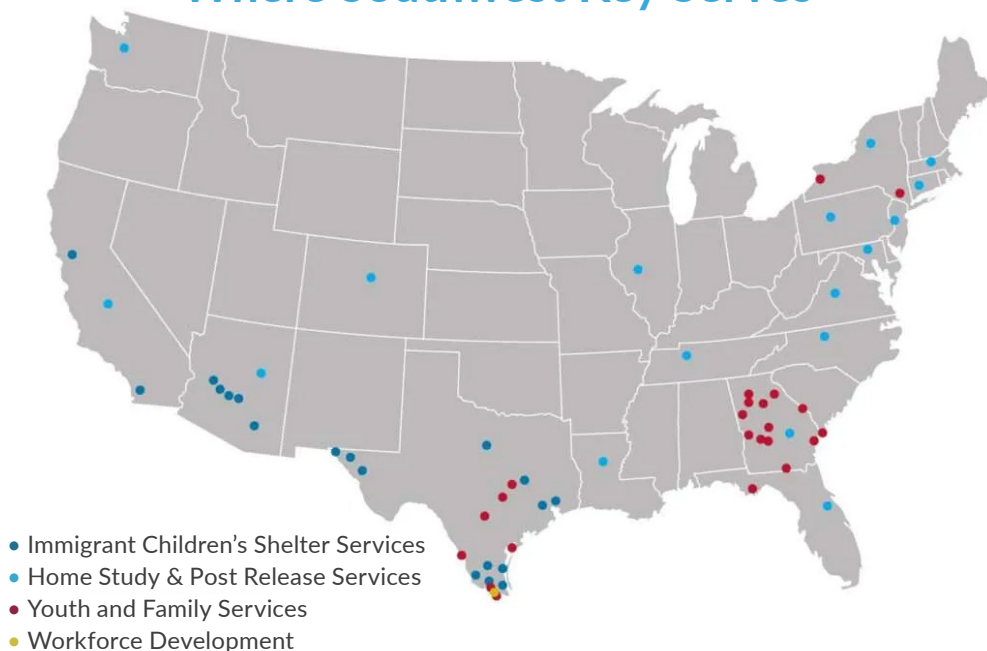
The RMTAC will serve behavioral health providers nationwide through online learning modules, clinical consultation, learning communities, training, web-based resources, and technical assistance. A wide variety of topics will be addressed, such as trauma-informed care, resiliency, and cultural and language competence, to name only a few.

AMTC is honored and excited to serve SWK as its evaluation partner. In this role, AMTC will analyze data to measure the implementation and evaluate the quality of services

available to providers who use the RMTAC. Together, AMTC and SWK will deliver in their respective areas of expertise to foster excellence in refugee and migrant care.



## Where Southwest Key Serves



## SOUTHWEST KEY SERVICES

*Discover More*

Click the following links for more information about each service Southwest Key offers.

- Youth and Family Services
- RMTAC
- Unaccompanied Children's Programs
- Workforce Development
- Home Study & Post Release
- Community Engagement

# Meet Our *Associates*

Our diverse team delivers fast, relevant results for our clients. Here are two individuals who contribute to those efforts.



**BRANDON OSBORN,  
PH.D.**  
SENIOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

WITH AMTC SINCE 2019

**EDUCATION:** Ph.D. in Public Health - Disease Prevention; Postdoctoral Fellowship in Implementation Science; Bachelor of Science in Health Science

***What is your role in supporting the RMTAC?***

AMTC provides evaluation, technical assistance, and support on activities, and I am the Co-Principal Investigator for the evaluation of the RMTAC along with Dr. Dominguez. During the proposal stage, I designed the evaluation approach using an implementation science framework and assisted with specifying some of the activities. I am also providing support to SWK by leading the evidence synthesis activity via a literature review and assisting with the online learning communities they plan to offer.

***What do you personally find meaningful about this role?***

Behavioral health is a prominent public health issue nationally. Migrant and refugee populations, especially survivors of human trafficking and forcibly displaced individuals, are particularly at risk. Trying to improve the capacity and knowledge among providers who serve these populations is much needed. We are all passionate about this work and what SWK is trying to accomplish.

***What do you hope SWK and AMTC will accomplish together?***

I hope that the training and technical assistance activities will be useful for providers nationwide, especially in healthcare settings that serve migrant and refugee populations.

***What has the experience been like so far partnering with SWK?***

It has been great so far. SWK has a large, highly skilled, and diverse team on this project that has been an absolute pleasure to work with.



**SALVADOR  
DOMINGUEZ, PH.D.**  
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

WITH AMTC SINCE 2022

**EDUCATION:** Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences with a research focus on mental health among emerging adults; Master of Public Health; Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences

***What is your role in supporting the RMTAC?***

I am Co-Principal Investigator along with Dr. Brandon Osborn. We provide SWK with technical assistance related to the planning of the project, assist with the creation of their needs assessment survey, and other tasks. We will also provide evaluation services to assess the effectiveness of the RMTAC once it is established.

***What do you personally find meaningful about this role?***

As someone who lives in a border community, the treatment and care of migrants and refugees are at the forefront of my mind. Mental health is another topic and passion of mine, and thus, the fact that this project combines the two has me fully invested. Migrants and refugees are a vulnerable population, and the RMTAC will be an invaluable resource for improving their care.

***What do you hope SWK and AMTC will accomplish together?***

I hope that we will successfully implement the most robust, effective version of the RMTAC and that our combined efforts will assist many providers who work with migrants and refugees.

***What has the experience been like so far partnering with SWK?***

It's been an honor and a pleasure to work with such a professional, diverse organization. You can tell that they are very passionate about the work they do, and they are committed to providing the best services possible to their clients. I look forward to continuing to work with the SWK team and getting to know them better.