



## PRESS RELEASE

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## 10,000 Miles for Mental Health Awareness

### Counselor's Trip Addresses Minority Mental Health Needs Around the Country

Greensboro, NC— In 2013, Dr. Robert A. Horne was one of the first people to receive an NBCC Foundation doctoral fellowship for counselors serving minorities and underserved communities. Now, coinciding with National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month this July, he will embark on a 10,000-mile, cross-country motorcycle ride to give back.

Horne, an assistant professor of counselor education at North Carolina Central University, leaves June 29 from Durham as part of his “Counseling Around America” motorcycle journey ([www.gofundme.com/counseling-around-america](http://www.gofundme.com/counseling-around-america)). He hopes to:

- Bring attention to the need to reduce disparities in mental health and addiction services.
- Encourage cultural competence in mental health and substance abuse treatment services for the wide diversity of communities and populations across the country.
- Raise \$30,000 to be distributed among three nonprofit mental health and addiction counseling-related organizations: National Board for Certified Counselors Foundation, North Carolina Central University Counselor Education Program Foundation/Addiction Studies Certificate Program, and the Uganda Counselling Association.

Horne has a special purpose for his month-long journey.

“I can help people better understand the importance of mental health and addiction awareness and treatment, as well as reduce the stigma some people associate with them,” he said.



Dr. Robert A. Horne and NBCC Foundation Staff

By circling the United States, Horne will complete the USA 4 Corners Motorcycle Tour, a long-distance ride that includes visiting the four corner cities of the United States (Madawaska, Maine; Blaine, Washington; San Ysidro, California; and Key West, Florida).

Fewer than 100 motorcyclists complete the 8,000-mile ride each year, and just 1,600 have done so in the 33 years the motorcycle tour has existed. Horne's ride, because he is leaving from Durham, will top 10,000 miles.

If Horne's route comes close to your agency or community and you'd like to have him drop by, you may contact him at [www.counselingaroundamerica.com](http://www.counselingaroundamerica.com). You also can follow his travel blog, <http://counselingaroundamerica.com/index.php/blog/>.

### **Robert A. Horne: The Man Behind the Mission**



During Dr. Robert A. Horne's 17 years in the U.S. Marine Corps, he watched comrades and loved ones struggle with addiction and its devastating effects. It forged in him a desire to bring about change.

Horne's post-military career began with helping people in need through the clothing bank and emergency assistance programs at Greensboro Urban Ministry. His work continued with a divinity degree and 20 years of pastoral service. Since 2010, he has obtained master's and doctoral degrees in counseling, started a private counseling practice, and created the addiction studies program at North Carolina Central University.

Horne is deeply passionate about his work in substance abuse and mental health as an advocate, researcher, counselor and instructor. "When I was with Greensboro Urban Ministry, I'd see things every day that were overwhelming. My work with underserved and at-risk populations led me to become a National Certified Counselor," says Horne, who in 2013 became one of the first doctoral students to be a recipient of a National Board for Certified Counselors Minority Fellowship Program award.

Horne says he knows the importance of giving back, building relationships and creating change. He believes his 10,000-mile motorcycle journey will bring attention to a problem he has seen adversely affecting individuals and their family members. The ultimate goal, according to Horne, is to build relationships and, in the process, make a difference in all four corners of the United States.

Horne also knows that disparities in mental health and addiction services exist because of barriers to care and the lack of culturally-appropriate care for many communities. He has committed himself to making a difference by working to build the cultural competency and diversity of those who work as professional counselors; reducing health care disparities in the community; and speaking out against the stigmas and barriers that stand in the way of treatment for substance use disorders and mental health problems.

Horne is lining up speaking engagements during his cross-country motorcycle trip to meet counselors, organizations and those in need with a message he hopes will both increase awareness and decrease the stigma that is too often associated with asking for help.

#### **ABOUT THE NBCC FOUNDATION**

The NBCC Foundation is the nonprofit affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), based in Greensboro, North Carolina. NBCC is the nation's premier professional certification board devoted to credentialing counselors who meet standards for the general and specialty practices of professional counseling. Currently, there are more than 63,000 National Certified Counselors in the United States and more than 50 countries. The Foundation's mission is to leverage the power of counseling by strategically focusing resources for positive change.