Shirin Ahmed (she, her, hers)
Graduate Intern

Shirin Ahmed is currently completing her master's degree in Clinical Psychology at Benedictine University. Shirin graduated magna cum laude from Elmhurst University with a B.A. in Psychology. Outside of counseling, Shirin is heavily involved in activism and advocacy spaces and volunteers for multiple relief organizations. She is passionate about human rights work, inclusion, and diversity. She is multilingual in Hindi, Urdu, and English. Shirin enjoys working with multicultural clients and understands issues specific to first- and second-generation young adults. She looks forward to working collaboratively with her clients while keeping her client’s goals as the utmost priority. She engages with clients in an accepting, empathetic and open manner and tries to create a safe space so clients can feel they are heard.

James Hutto (he, him, his)
Graduate Intern

James Hutto is currently completing his M.S. in Clinical Psychology at Benedictine University. James graduated from Elmhurst College with a B.A. in Psychology and a minor in Spanish and Sociology. James is passionate about working with young adults and addressing with them the various stressors and hardships that they experience in their lives. James uses a client-centered therapeutic approach as a basis for working with clients, but also employs other techniques from approaches like cognitive-behavior therapy and positive psychotherapy. He works to be a culturally competent counselor and enjoys working with individuals from a variety of different backgrounds. James looks forwards to collaborating with his clients in the future.

Peggy Tomchek, M.S., L.C.P.C. (she, her, hers)
Counseling Coordinator

Peggy Tomchek earned her M.S. in Clinical Psychology from Benedictine University and is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor. Prior to joining the Benedictine University Counseling Center, Peggy worked in a private practice where she worked extensively with adolescent and young adult clients. She is passionate about supporting college students while they explore their identities, navigate transitions, and experience growth. Peggy meets clients where they are in their lives with an empathic and accepting manner, offering them a safe space to explore their lives. She uses a person-centered approach drawing on many therapeutic techniques, including cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness, strengths-focused therapy and stress reduction techniques to best help clients. Her areas of focus are depression, anxiety, family and relationship challenges, transitions, stress management, grief, and trauma. She embraces working with people of all faiths, genders, sexual orientations and racial and ethnic backgrounds. She looks forward to walking with you on your journey of personal discovery.