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Michael Dwayne Pelts was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Michael graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi with a Bachelor's Degree in Social and Rehabilitation Services in 1991. He worked for several years in direct service and administering social services programs in Tennessee and Florida before pursuing the Masters of Social Work (MSW) Degree. Michael graduated from Portland State University with the MSW Degree in 2010. Following graduation, Michael worked as a psychiatric social worker in forensic mental health for the State of Washington for two years. He entered the doctoral program at the University of Missouri in August 2012. From August 2012 to August 2015 Michael worked as a graduate assistant performing research and teaching activities in a variety settings. Research included activities related to school social work, military members and veterans, and gerontechnology. Work as a graduate research assistant on a large, empirical, interdisciplinary study funded by the National Institutes of Health, inspired work for Michael's dissertation. In August 2015, Michael accepted a visiting instructor position at the University of Southern Mississippi while completing his dissertation. Michael successfully defended his dissertation on November 5, 2015 and graduated from the University of Missouri in December of 2015. He plans to continue teaching and developing his research.