

2026 Office of Justice Programs Annual Conference on Crime and Victimization

June 3 & 4, 2026
The Heritage Center
Brooklyn Center



Welcome, conference attendees!

Thank you for attending the 2026 Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Conference on Crime and Victimization. This is the 38th annual conference, and *we're glad you're here!* This e-booklet provides an overview of the sessions, speakers, and helpful information about the conference.

Conference facility

The Heritage Center of Brooklyn Center serves as the central location for the conference, where you will find the registration table, exhibitor fair, breakout session rooms, and snacks and meals. Designated way finders are ready to help you navigate the space.

OJP Conference Team – available for you

The OJP Conference Team is made up of OJP staff and members of the Training Advisory Committee. They will be wearing ribbons on their name tags during the conference and are here to assist you. Please bring any concerns or questions you have to their attention.

Commitment to safety

OJP is dedicated to hosting a conference experience for attendees that is inclusive, safe, accessible, and welcoming for all. We invite you to help us create and maintain this space of belonging to make it a positive experience for everyone. If related concerns arise during the conference, please connect with the [OJP Conference Director](#) or a Training Advisory Committee member. Any of these people are available in person or can be contacted by email. Their email addresses are linked to their names listed below. All conference team members have ribbons on their name tags.

Mindfulness room, Prayer Room, and Mothers' Room

- The Morgan Room has been designated as a space for our Mindfulness Room and Prayer Room, a quiet space you can use during the conference. This comfortable, technology-free space allows attendees to take care of themselves, whether it be for processing a session, taking time for reflection, or meditation.
- A separate Mothers' Room (a small private boardroom) can be accessed through the center's office. We're grateful to have these spaces and thank you for respecting others who use the rooms by engaging in quiet activities when in or near the rooms.

Exhibitor Fair

Organizations throughout the state can be found tabling at the Exhibitor Fair.

- Tables are positioned in the Carriage Hall (our general session space) for increased visibility and accessibility.
- Please visit the exhibitors throughout the conference to learn about what agencies are doing and whom they are serving.

Evaluation forms

- Following the keynote and each session attended, you'll have the opportunity to provide feedback by completing a short evaluation form distributed by a conference team member.
- Evaluations are used and analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of individual speakers, themes, and the quality and relevance of topics they present.
- We want your feedback on the overall conference format and content. A longer evaluation is being used to make improvements to next year's event and will be emailed after the conference concludes. Thank you in advance for completing these evaluations.

Continuing education units/credits

- Professional continuing education credits have been approved for some of the workshop sessions.
- A complete list of the sessions and types of credits that were approved can be found on [pages 18 and 19](#) in this e-booklet.

Turn in your lanyard!

- Attendees can enter a name tag drawing for a chance to win a grand prize at the end of the conference, along with an opportunity to take home one of several donated prizes furnished by the exhibitors.
- Lanyards can be dropped in the boxes located at the registration area at the end of the conference. The drawing will take place right after the closing remarks, and you must be present to win.

Training Advisory Committee

Thank you to the Training Advisory Committee members for their guidance, support, and dedication throughout the year. Without their help in preparation and assistance, the conference would not be possible.

[Christina Busse](#) / [Monique Drier Sutton](#) / [Suzanne Elwell](#) / [Rebecca Kuttly](#) / [Katie Rojas-Jahn](#) / [Katie Kramer](#) / [Sophia Maceda](#) / [Becca Muskat](#) / [Farji Shaheer](#) / [Brenda Skogman](#) / [Drea Stephani](#) / [Ashley Sturz-Griffith](#) / [Thi Synavone](#) /

Awards

We will be honoring two nominated recipients this year during Wednesday's lunch with our annual awards. Lunch is included in your conference registration, and everyone is welcome to attend.

- The **Distinguished Service Award** recognizes an individual who has demonstrated outstanding and sustained service to crime victims over the course of their career and is an inspiration and example to others who serve crime victim survivors in Minnesota. It can be awarded to someone in any capacity or profession and can also be given to programs and organizations.
- The **Dr. William Kosiak Victim Service Professional Award** honors an individual whose primary responsibilities involve working with crime victims and whose efforts advance victim survivor services and/or rights at the state, tribal, and/or local level.

Medallion hunt

If you're looking for an avenue to challenge your mind outside the many workshops at the conference this year, the medallion hunt is for you! The OJP medallion has been carefully hidden somewhere inside or on the grounds of the Heritage Center, and the person who finds it will receive waived registration for next year's OJP conference. A series of clues will be posted at the registration desk throughout the day on Wednesday with more clues on Thursday until the medallion is found. Good Luck!



Conference Spaces Guide

Conference Registration: Pre-function Hall

Keynote Session: Carriage Hall

Exhibitor Fair: Carriage Hall

Food/Snack buffet tables: Pre-Function Hall outside the Carriage Hall, and in between the Harvest and Garden City Ballrooms

Where to sit for breakfast/lunch: Carriage Hall

Mindfulness/Prayer/Meditation Room: Morgan Room - Lower Level

Mothers' Room: Private boardroom accessed through the main office

Gender Neutral Restroom: Access through the main office

Wi-Fi Connection: The Heritage Center has an open network called “Heritage Center Guest.” No password is required.



Schedule At-a-Glance

OJP annual conference DAY ONE Wednesday, JUNE 3, 2026		
SESSION	ROOM	PRESENTER
Registration Opens 7:30 a.m.	Pre Function Hall	
Light Breakfast and Exhibitor Fair Set Up 7:30 a.m.	Pre Function Hall	
Welcome and Opening Remarks from DPS Leadership Intro to Keynote 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	Carriage Hall	DPS/OJP Leadership, Joann Jones
Keynote: Finding Strength after Sextortion & Suicide 9:30-11:00 a.m.	Carriage Hall	Jaime Bremseth
<i>Morning Break and transition to breakout sessions 11:00-11:30 a.m.</i>		
BREAKOUT SESSION ONE: 11:30 a.m-12:30 p.m.		
Creating a Strong Partnership Between Victim Witness and Advocacy Organizations	Harvest C	Christie Larson & Nancy Yates
Extreme Risk Protection Orders: Legal Process, Implementation, and Best Practices	Harvest A	Rana Alexander, Esq. & Bridget Liverca
Back to the Future for the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA): The Development and Validation of an Actuarial Risk Assessment Instrument for Sexual Violence in Prison	Tack A	Grant Duwe & Valerie Clark
How can I trust your apology if you can't even say what you did? A Conversation About Apology Letters Focused on Victim, Survivor, and Advocate Insights	Tack B	Chris Godsey
Centering Survivor Voices: Survivor Advisory Councils at DV shelters	Captain	Holly Henning, Jake De Vera, TaVonne Grayson, Jessica Jungroth, & Maritza Brunty
The Era of Digital Danger	Garden City Ballroom	Emma Schroer, M.A & Stephanie Randolph
At the Intersection of Erasure: Black & Indigenous Women Missing from the Same Systems	Harvest B	Alla Hassan & Tawney Smith-Savage
<i>Lunch and Award Ceremony 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.</i>	Pre Function Hall	
BREAKOUT SESSION TWO: 1:30-3:00 p.m.		
Under a Watchful Eye: Child Abuse in Youth-Serving Organizations	Captain	Alison Feigh, MS
Designing for the Margins: Systems Change that Strengthens Victim Services for All	Tack B	Katie Meinhardt
Building Resilient Communities: Minnesota's Approach to Human Trafficking Prevention and Trauma-Informed Education	Harvest C	Anne LaFrinier-Ritchie & Andrea White
MN DOC's Restorative Justice Pilot Project: Use of RJ Approaches to Address Violence & Effect Culture Change	Garden City Ballroom	Sarah King & Tito Campbell
Collective Care in Movement Spaces	Harvest B	Hunter Beckstrom & Lakeisha Lee
Intimidation of Domestic Violence Victims	Harvest A	Scott Miller & Rhonda Martinson
State Responses to Labor Trafficking	Tack A	Nigel Perrote, Caitlin Orgon, Bobbi Jo Pazdernik, Amanda Lager, & Treye Kettwick
<i>Afternoon Break 3:00-3:30 p.m.</i>	Pre Function Hall	
BREAKOUT SESSION THREE: 3:30-4:30 p.m.		
Help Shouldn't Hurt: The Hidden Barriers Survivors Face in Healthcare	Harvest B	Joanna (Jo) Bolte
Financial Exploitation and Older Adults	Tack A	Marit Peterson & Betsy Mevissen
"Women Cry Silently at Home": Understanding and Addressing Family Violence in the Somali-American Community through Culturally Specific Research	Tack B	Fartun Wel, MPH, MAPP & Dr. Leso Munala
Justice Through Unity: Elevating Survivor Safety with Strategic Partnerships	Harvest C	Rosilyn Steinkamp & Katrina Wagner
Collaborative Strategies to Recover Wages for Labor Trafficked Workers	Captain	Siv Dobrovolny, Andrea White, & Griselt Andrade
Mass Violence Incident Response: The Victim Service Professional's Role	Garden City Ballroom	Siri Lokensgard, MSW, LICSW, DeAna Smith, & Cece Olsen
Enhanced Notifications for Victims of Sexual Violence Post Conviction	Harvest A	Heather Kolling
Self-Care Session: Guided Self-Muscle Massage: Relax and Relieve Tension 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Garden City Ballroom	Julie Marie Muskat

DAY TWO: Thursday, June 4, 2026		
Registration Opens 7:30 a.m.	Pre Function Hall	
Light Breakfast 7:30 a.m.	Pre Function Hall	
Exhibitor Fair Opens 8:00 a.m.	Carriage Hall	
BREAKOUT SESSION FOUR: 8:30-10:00 a.m.		
Ethical Considerations in Mandated Reporting	Harvest A	Michelle Harris
Productive Venting: Venting Without Damage	Harvest B	Emilyn Wahl
Rural by Design: Why and How We Measure Needs Differently	Harvest C	Katelyn Page & Briana Theising
Stronger Together: Shakopee Police Department's Multi-Disciplinary Approach	Captain	Missie Boone, Payton Somerville, MSW, LICSW, & Jamie Pearson
Animal Advocates: Unleashing Compassion. The Vital Work of Facility Dog Teams in the World of Criminal Justice and Beyond	Garden City Ballroom	Elizabeth Eagle with Nova & Keli Trautman with Stuff
Unseen Survivors: The Experiences of Criminalized Women and Gender-Diverse Survivors of Gender-Based Violence	Tack A	Anne Applebaum, Flora Whitfield, Natalie Pollard, Andrea Carrier
Mobile Advocacy - Lessons Learned: A Panel of OJP's Domestic Violence Housing First Grantees	Tack B	Johanna (Jo) Bolte, Erica Staab, Anika Rychner, Cira Sanchez
<i>Morning Break 10:00-10:30 a.m.</i>	Pre Function Hall	
BREAKOUT SESSION FIVE: 10:30-11:30 a.m.		
Creating Conditions for Accountability	Captain	Laura Thro, MPS
Meeting Survivors Where They Are: Esperanza United's Advocacy Approaches for Supporting Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence	Harvest A	Angie Mejia, Ph.D.
Incorporating Child Support Services into Protective Order Processes – Collaborating for Safety	Garden City Ballroom	Nicole Ross, Maria Maier, & Ambrosia Mosby-Velasco
Closing/Adjourn 11:45 a.m.	Carriage Hall	
Exhibitor Fair Tear Down 12:00 p.m.	Carriage Hall	

Conference Schedule

7:30 a.m.	Registration	Pre-Function Hallway
7:30 a.m.	Light breakfast	Pre-Function Hallway
7:30 a.m.	Exhibitor Fair set up	Carriage Hall

Welcome and opening remarks from DPS leadership

9:00-9:30 a.m.	General session space	Carriage Hall
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Keynote session

9:30-11 a.m.	General session space	Carriage Hall
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Carter's Legacy: Finding Strength after Sextortion and Suicide

Jaime Bremseth, Carter Bremseth Memorial Foundation

Jaime Bremseth is the founder and president of the Carter Bremseth Memorial Foundation. Carter was her first born, and becoming his mom was one of the greatest moments of her life. Jaime will talk about her son's experience and stress the importance of staying safe online and mental health.

Jaime is blessed to have two more children to spend her days with, but the ache of Carter's death has never gone away. As a passionate mental health professional, working primarily with children and adolescents and those in crisis situations, she strives to support everyone to become the best versions of themselves. Spreading HOPE, teaching children how to grieve the losses in their lives and transparently sharing Carter's story to reduce stigma around suicide and mental health are her goals, strengths and life work.

11:00–11:30 a.m. Morning Break 1

Pre-Function Hallway

11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. ■ Breakout Session 1

Creating a Strong Partnership Between Victim Witness and Advocacy Organizations

Christy Larson, Southern Valley Alliance & Nancy Yates, Carver County

Harvest C

This workshop highlights the critical partnership between Victim Witness programs and community-based domestic violence advocacy organizations in providing coordinated, survivor-centered responses. Participants will explore how collaboration across systems improves victim safety, reduces barriers to support, and promotes consistent, trauma-informed engagement throughout the criminal justice process. Presenters will discuss distinct and complementary roles, confidentiality considerations, and effective communication strategies, while sharing practical examples of successful partnerships in domestic violence cases.

Extreme Risk Protection Orders: Legal Process, Implementation, and Best Practices

Rana Alexander, Esq. & Bridget Liverca, Hennepin County Attorney's Office

Harvest A

This training provides a comprehensive overview of Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs), a civil legal tool designed to temporarily restrict firearm access for individuals at risk of harming themselves or others. Participants will learn who can petition for an ERPO, the legal and procedural steps involved, and best practices for enforcement and firearm surrender. The session emphasizes interprofessional collaboration among law enforcement, attorneys, judges, clinicians, and social service providers. Attendees gain practical skills for filing petitions and coordinating responses. The training equips professionals to implement ERPOs effectively and enhance community safety.

Back to the Future for the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA): The Development and Validation of an Actuarial Risk Assessment Instrument for Sexual Violence in Prison

Grant Duwe & Val Clark, MN Department of Corrections

Tack A

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), enacted in 2003, requires correctional agencies to screen incarcerated individuals for risk of sexual victimization and sexual abusiveness. Although the Act specifies relevant risk factors, no validated actuarial tool has existed for adult correctional populations. Using data from 22,238 admissions to Minnesota's prison system, Grant and Val evaluated the predictive performance of the state's current PREA screening tool, which was developed using professional judgment. Its accuracy was limited, prompting the development of a gender-specific actuarial instrument tailored to Minnesota's population to assess risk of sexual victimization and abuse. When tested on a separate sample, the new tool showed strong predictive validity, with AUC values of 0.74–0.79 for women and 0.71–0.73 for men. These findings suggest that validated actuarial tools can substantially improve the assessment of sexual violence risk in prisons and better support the goals of PREA.

How can I trust your apology if you can't even say what you did? A Conversation About Apology Letters Focused on Victim, Survivor, and Advocate Insights

Chris Godsey, MN Department of Corrections

Tack B

As part of an ongoing Department of Corrections Restorative Justice Program effort to learn about victim survivor and advocate perspectives on apologies, Chris will share information about the program's apology letter process then initiate dialogue about how the process can more effectively reflect victim-survivor needs. Ideally at least an hour of the session will be spent in dialogue – purpose-driven conversation intended to gather victim, survivor, and advocate perspectives about apologies in response to a handful of specific questions and relevant topics that arise.

Centering Survivor Voices: Survivor Advisory Councils at Domestic Violence Shelters

**Holly Henning, Jake De Vera, TaVonne Grayson,
Jessica Jungroth & Maritza Brunty, Women's Advocates**

Captain

Women's Advocates will share the inspiration, founding, and ongoing leadership of our Survivor Advisory Council. Members of the council alongside organizational leaders they most often collaborate with will talk openly about how this form of leadership has worked over the past five years at Women's Advocates using examples from the council's annual workplan and process to achievement of the pet foster program, safe harbor advocacy program implementation, the Lean on Me youth mentorship program, and helping to design the new shelter building expansion.

The Era of Digital Danger

Emma Schroer, M.A. & Stephanie Randolph, CornerHouse

Garden City Ballroom

Children and teenagers devote a significant portion of their time to online activity and remain in near-constant contact with others via digital communication. These platforms have been identified as a prime location for targeting and connecting with youth. Predators can develop fake identities with fake pictures, names, and ages, and use profiles that appear innocuous - communicating with potential victims while benefiting from minimal oversight and implicit anonymity. Until social media platforms can develop reliable security measures, it is vital that professionals develop dependable methods of asking children about their interactions and experiences online. This training will provide professionals with an overview of popular social media and online platforms as a way to become familiar with these sites and their uses. This training will also provide insight into the types of questions to ask children regarding these experiences within a forensic interview or investigation.

At the Intersection of Erasure: Black and Indigenous Women Missing from the Same Systems

Harvest B

Alla Hassan & Tawny Smith-Savage, MN Department of Public Safety Office of Justice Programs

Minnesota is home to the nation's first Missing and Murdered Black Women and Girls Office and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives Office, both housed within the Department of Public Safety's Office of Justice Programs. This session brings together the Violence Prevention and Training Coordinators from each office to examine how anti-Black and anti-Indigenous violence operates through shared systems - fragmented databases, racial misclassification, under-investigation - while producing distinct harm rooted in different histories of erasure. Presenters will explore what intersectionality demands in practice: building collaboration that amplifies both communities without flattening their experiences. Attendees will leave with actionable strategies for cross community partnership, culturally grounded training design, and systems level advocacy that honors Afro-Indigenous connections while respecting the specificity each community requires.

12:30-1:30 p.m. Lunch and Award Ceremony

Carriage Hall

1:30-3:30 p.m. ■ Breakout Session 2

Under a Watchful Eye: Child Abuse in Youth Service Organizations

Captain

Alison Feigh, MS, Zero Abuse Project

Youth Serving Organizations (YSOS) can provide quality experiences for youth to thrive under the care of quality staff and volunteers. The sad reality is that organizations that provide access, time, and the ability to build relationships with youth are targeted by offenders as places to find possible targets. Most people are in youth work for the right reasons, but one person engaging in a group to look for targets can destroy the legacy of a program and, even worse, have detrimental effects on the lives of involved youth. There is no room for denial or minimization when the health of children and youth are at stake. This presentation will provide resources for advocates and social service professionals about the dynamics of abuse that occur within YSOS and provide resources to those trying to keep programs safer in the communities they serve.

Designing for the Margins: Systems Change that Strengthens Victim Services for All

Katie Meinhardt, ThinkSELF

Tack B

Deaf and disabled survivor access is not a niche reform issue — it is a systems design issue. When we design services that work for survivors with the most complex access needs, we strengthen victim services for **everyone**. This workshop explores how barriers faced by Deaf and disabled survivors reveal broader structural gaps in communication, policy, intake, and service delivery. Grounded in the principle “Design for the margins strengthens the majority,” participants will leave with concrete strategies to move beyond compliance toward proactive, system-wide accessibility.

Building Resilient Communities: Minnesota's Approach to Human Trafficking Prevention and Trauma-Informed Education

Anne LaFrinier-Ritchie, Someplace Safe & Andrea White, Olmsted County

Harvest C

Human trafficking prevention requires a comprehensive, community-driven approach. In this session, participants will explore Minnesota's innovative strategies for implementing prevention efforts statewide. Attendees will gain practical tools for delivering trauma-informed education to youth, ensuring that prevention messaging is both effective and sensitive to the needs of survivors and vulnerable populations. The session will also address common barriers organizations face when implementing prevention work and provide actionable solutions to overcome these challenges. By the end of this session, participants will leave equipped with evidence-based practices, adaptable resources, and strategies to strengthen resilience and foster safer communities.

Minnesota Dept. of Corrections Restorative Justice (RJ) Pilot Project: Use of RJ Approaches to Address Violence & Effect Culture Change

Sarah King & Tito Campbell, MN Department of Corrections

Garden City Ballroom

The Minnesota Department of Corrections conducted a pilot project in Stillwater prison to use restorative justice principles and practices to reduce violence between incarcerated individuals and foster culture change within the prison facility. The project was led by incarcerated men and key correction staff. The project emphasized accountability, healing, and peer influence rather than compliance and punishment. This workshop will explain the pilot project model, present quantitative and qualitative data on project outcomes, and discuss lessons learned and potential applications within and outside of correctional settings. The session will explore questions as to how we consider victimization experienced by incarcerated individuals, when restorative approaches can result in accountability and/or healing, and how restorative practices can be more broadly applied in the criminal legal system.

Collective Care in Movement Spaces

Hunter Beckstrom & Lakeisha Lee, Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA)

Harvest B

Designed for new and seasoned advocates, this interactive workshop situates collective care as a necessary means to advance, empower, and sustain the movement to end violence. This session roots care through the collective action and lens of Black Feminism. Through advocate-based research, participants will examine barriers to collective care, including oppression, white supremacy culture, burnout, and lack of survivor-centered care. Each barrier is illustrated through real-world examples and relevant experiences. This workshop weaves frameworks of prevention and radical love to actualize skills and strategies. Participants will learn, discuss, and envision tangible actions to build power for collective liberation, inside and outside the movement.

Intimidation of Domestic Violence Victims

Scott Miller & Rhonda Martinson, Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs

Harvest A

“The only conversation she had about intimidation was with prosecution staff - she was scared to testify after her statement was given to her abuser. But they only talked to her about going to jail if she didn’t obey the subpoena. This reality was echoed by most group participants. No one talked to them about intimidation, what it is, what to do about it, or who to report it to.” *Victim focus groups on intimidation, conducted by presenters in Duluth, MN.* This describes what a team in St. Louis County learned 10 years ago when they observed domestic violence law enforcement processes, interviewed criminal justice professionals, and reviewed domestic violence case files to investigate how witness intimidation occurred in these cases. This presentation illustrates how since then, staying aware of witness intimidation became a way not only to better hold offenders accountable and keep victims safer, but also a way to identify gaps in our responses to domestic violence.

State Responses to Labor Trafficking

Nigel Perrote, Caitlin Orgon & Amanda Lager, MN Dept. of Children, Youth and Families; Bobbi Jo Pazdernik, MN BCA; Treye Kettwick, Ramsey Co. Attorney’s Office

Tack A

In this session, subject matter experts representing a wealth of youth and child safety adjacent backgrounds, including Tribal, law enforcement, prosecution, and child protection/maltreatment, will discuss ways to identify and address labor trafficking by discussing different state agency approaches to responding to labor trafficking and how to support children and families who have experienced labor trafficking.

3:30 – 4:30 p.m. ■ Breakout Session 3**Help Shouldn't Hurt: The Hidden Barriers Survivors Face in Healthcare****Johanna (Jo) Bolte, Someplace Safe****Harvest B**

This presentation exposes the often-unseen fear and emotional risk survivors experience when seeking medical care after domestic violence or sexual assault. While healthcare systems are built to promote healing, many survivors approach them with intense anxiety—fearing being recognized by someone they know, worried about insurance notifications reaching an abuser, uncertain about who can access their medical records through patient portals, and fearful of follow-up contact that can feel intrusive or unsafe. Through a survivor-centered lens, this session walks step-by-step through what it is truly like to seek medical care after violence, from the decision to go to the hospital through forensic exams, documentation, billing, and post-visit surveys. Participants will gain insight into how routine processes can unintentionally retraumatize and jeopardize the safety of a survivor and how trauma-informed practices can transform fear into safety, dignity, and trust.

Financial Exploitation and Older Adults**Marit Peterson and Betsy Mevissen, Minnesota Elder Justice Center****Tack A**

Older adults are being deliberately targeted by financial exploiters: from strangers in international scams to family members taking advantage of personal vulnerabilities. This session is an overview of financial exploitation and will explore dynamics present in situations of financial harm and provide examples of the range of experiences suffered by older victims. Presenters will discuss interventions available when someone is experiencing financial exploitation and will share strategies to guard against it.

"Women Cry Silently at Home": Understanding and Addressing Family Violence in the Somali-American Community through Culturally Specific Research**Fartun Weli, MPH, MAPP, Isuroon, and Dr. Leso Munala, University of Minnesota****Tack B**

What drives family violence in refugee and immigrant communities, and why do mainstream interventions often fall short? This session opens a window into the Somali American experience, where family violence is shaped by unique pressures: remittance obligations that create financial secrecy, an addiction crisis dissolving family bonds, and the collapse of traditional elder mediation in a U.S. context where conflicts end up with law enforcement. Participants will hear directly from community voices collected through a Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) project led by Isuroon, a culturally specific organization in Minneapolis. Presenters will share how they moved from these raw findings to developing concrete policy recommendations, demonstrating why one-size-fits-all approaches fail and how culturally grounded solutions from Imam-led counseling to elder mediation training can bridge the gap between cultural values and survivor safety.

Justice Through Unity: Elevating Survivor Safety with Strategic Partnerships

Rosilyn Steinkamp & Katrina Wagner, Women's Shelter and Support Center

Harvest C

Domestic violence shelters play a critical role in empowering survivors, but lasting change requires more than isolated efforts. This session highlights how one shelter built strategic, cross-sector partnerships with law enforcement, prosecutors, local universities, and community organizations to elevate survivor safety and improve justice outcomes while also educating the community around domestic violence. Presenters will share practical strategies for developing trust, aligning goals, and navigating the complexities of multidisciplinary collaboration, while keeping survivor autonomy and safety at the center. Real-world examples will illustrate how coordinated safety planning, shared accountability, and trauma-informed communication can help dismantle systemic barriers and drive meaningful change. Attendees will gain actionable tools for strengthening interagency collaboration, balancing safety with prosecution priorities, and amplifying survivor voices in complex systems. Whether you're new to collaboration or looking to enhance existing efforts, this session offers a grounded model for uniting systems to empower survivors and sustain change.

Collaborative Strategies to Recover Wages for Labor Trafficked Workers

Siv Dobrovolny, MN Dept. of Labor and Industry; Andrea White, Olmsted County & Griselt Andrade, Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services

Captain

Where is my money? This is a question labor trafficked individuals often ask when they have been unpaid or underpaid for their work. Monetary recovery in labor trafficking cases is possible and often the outcome individuals are seeking most. Getting back wages due to employees is part of the work state labor standards units engage in every day. Stakeholders such as advocates, attorneys, and social workers who are able to connect labor trafficked individuals with labor agencies can increase workers chances of monetary recovery. The panelists will discuss how they have worked together to reach this goal with case examples.

Mass Violence Incident Response: The Victim Service Professional's Role

Siri Lokensgard, MSW, LGSW, Hennepin County; DeAna Smith, Hennepin Co. Attorney's Office, Cece Olson, Minneapolis Police Department

Garden City Ballroom

In this panel discussion, victim service professionals will hear directly from local practitioners who responded to the Annunciation Church shooting. Panelists will share their experiences, challenges, and lessons learned from navigating the immediate and longer-term needs of victims, families, and the broader community. This session will help participants better understand the critical roles victim service professionals can play during and after a mass-violence incident and will offer practical insights to strengthen preparedness within their own communities.

Enhanced Notifications for Victims of Sexual Violence Post Conviction

Heather Kolling, MN Department of Corrections

Harvest A

Victim survivors of sexual violence are entitled to enhanced notification related to their abuser's release from prison. This information can be crucial in safety planning efforts, though many victims are unsure how to get the information they seek. Further, victims of sexual violence may request the right to provide input at various points during incarceration. But what does that actually look like? This presentation will provide in depth discussion into what it means when a survivor asserts their right for enhanced notification related to a predatory offense and how service providers can best support them.

After hours opportunity

5:00-6:00 p.m.

Guided Self-Muscle Massage: Relax and Relieve Tension!

Julie Marie Muskat, Deeper Water Arts

Garden City Ballroom

Self-muscle massage uses a tennis ball and clinically proven myofascial release techniques to relieve stress, improve circulation, and promote holistic wellness through preventative health management. A simple tennis ball offers a helpful and portable way for anyone (of any age or mobility) to take care of their body and treat/prevent soreness or tight muscles that can lead to discomfort or injury. You can even utilize this self-care modality during your workday! This technique of myofascial release is particularly useful for folks who have difficulty with physical touch due to past trauma; it provides an autonomous way to experience touch positively. This is an interactive/experiential seminar.

Thursday, June 4, 2026 | Day Two

7:00-8:00 a.m. Light Breakfast

Pre-Function Hallway

7:30-8:30 a.m. Registration

Pre-Function Hallway

8:00 a.m. Exhibitor Fair Opens

Carriage Hall

8:30 – 10:00 a.m. ■ Breakout Session 4

Ethical Considerations in Mandated Reporting

Michelle Harris, CornerHouse

Harvest A

Every day we encounter situations that challenge the balance between the laws and our ethical duties. In this training, participants will begin to understand how children or vulnerable adults may express potential abuse or neglect either through an observation or disclosure. Minnesota's mandated reporter laws require any suspicions of abuse or neglect be reported. Participants will gain an understanding of the laws, how to make a mandated report and tips to make a thorough report. Then, specific ethical and challenging topics will be discussed with plenty of time for queries to both the trainer and other professionals. Participants will be given specific information about what the law requires and how to handle difficult circumstances.

Productive Venting: Venting Without Damage

Emilyn Wahl, Someplace Safe

Harvest B

Professionals working with crime victims and court-involved families are routinely exposed to high-conflict dynamics, secondary trauma, and emotionally charged information. Venting can be an important coping tool, however when unmanaged, it can quietly shift neutrality, reinforce bias, and influence decision-making in ways that impact victim safety and system integrity. This session examines the difference between productive and toxic venting through an ethical and practice-based lens. Participants will explore how venting shows up in teams, documentation, and informal communication, and how it can either support or undermine trauma-informed, victim-centered work. Using real-world examples, this workshop offers practical strategies for processing difficult cases, supporting staff, and maintaining professional boundaries without silencing legitimate concerns. Emphasis is placed on protecting victims, preserving credibility, and ensuring venting does not become a hidden risk factor within systems.

Rural by Design: Why and How We Measure Needs Differently

Katelyn Page & Briana Theising, Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA)

Harvest C

Traditional metrics used to measure sexual assault response: population size, service utilization, hotline calls, forensic exams and police reports often fail to capture the realities of rural communities. In many rural counties, low numbers can create the illusion of low need when, in fact, they reflect barriers to reporting such as geographic isolation, lack of anonymity, social proximity to responders, and community power dynamics. This session explores why common measurement models distort rural realities and what critical information is missed when systems rely primarily on service volume. Drawing on rural systems work in Minnesota, the presentation introduces an equity-centered approach to measuring needs that focus on access barriers, system capacity, and community trust. Participants will gain practical strategies for developing measurement frameworks that better reflect rural conditions and support more equitable funding and system design.

Stronger Together: Shakopee Police Department's Multi-Disciplinary Approach

Missie Boone, CA, Payton Somerville, MSW, LICSW, and Chief Jamie Pearson, Shakopee Police Department Captain

Having both a victim advocate and social worker embedded within the police department—alongside officers and investigators—creates stronger, more consistent outcomes in high-impact cases involving victims and/or mental health crises. This workshop examines how housing victim advocates and social workers within law enforcement enhances real-time collaboration, improves victim safety, and strengthens offender accountability in incidents involving but not limited to domestic assaults, sexual assaults, and mental health crises. Participants will articulate the benefits of a multidisciplinary team (MDT) model. This panel discussion will highlight core elements of effective collaboration, including structured communication, shared protocols, clearly defined roles, case review processes, and cross-agency coordination with prosecutors and community partners. The workshop also explores trauma-informed and victim-centered practices that reduce re-traumatization, increase victim engagement, and improve investigative outcomes. Attendees will leave with practical strategies to build or strengthen an embedded, department-based coordinated response model.

Animal Advocates: Unleashing Compassion. The Vital Work of Facility Dog Teams in the World of Criminal Justice and Beyond

Elizabeth Eagle & Nova, CornerHouse & Keli Trautman & Stuff, Stearns County

Garden City Ballroom

Explore the benefits in the criminal justice system of facility dog teams, which provide emotional support for victims and witnesses, particularly children. The use of trained canines in police departments, prosecutors' offices, and advocacy centers has gained traction in the U.S. and is expanding globally. Evidence demonstrates that these dogs can effectively reduce stress and anxiety during legal proceedings, thus enhancing communication and aiding trauma recovery. Scientific research shows both short-term physical and psychological benefits associated with canine presence, including decreases in blood pressure and heart rate, as well as improvements in social interaction and mental well-being. Facility dogs, recognized as a specific type of assistance dog, undergo rigorous training in accredited programs to ensure their effectiveness across diverse service environments. The presence of these dogs not only fosters a supportive atmosphere but also improves the overall quality of the legal process, making them invaluable assets in the pursuit of justice.

Unseen Survivors: The Experiences of Criminalized Women and Gender-Diverse Survivors of Gender-Based Violence

Anne Applebaum, Flora Whitfield, Natalie Pollard, & Andrea Carrier, The Advocates for Human Rights Tack A

Women and gender diverse individuals face increasing rates of incarceration, and all too often their arrest and prosecution stem directly from gender-based violence they have experienced. This panel will discuss various dynamics surrounding the criminalization of survivors of gender-based violence. The panel will include a staff member from The Advocates for Human Rights' WATCH court observation project and three WATCH Project Advisors with lived experience who partner with WATCH as project consultants. The panel will present court observation data from cases involving women and gender-diverse defendants, discuss challenges that criminalized survivors face at various junctures of the legal system, and share recommendations for addressing these systemic issues.

Mobile Advocacy Lessons Learned: A Panel of OJP's Domestic Violence Housing First Grantees

Johanna (Jo) Bolte, Someplace Safe, Erica Staab, HOPE Coalition, Anika Rychner, Community Action Northfield & Cira Sanchez, CLUES Tack B

OJP launched a Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF) grant in 2024. The grant is modeled after the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence's (WSCADV) Domestic Violence Housing First approach, which includes three key components: Survivor-Driven, Trauma-Informed Mobile Advocacy, Flexible Financial Assistance, and Community Engagement. Three of the current OJP grantees will share mobile advocacy lessons learned through implementation. Discussion will include how they enhanced their existing mobile advocacy activities, how they have worked to build community engagement critical to enhance mobile advocacy, and ways they have strengthened internal support amongst staff, leadership, and boards.

10:00–10:30 a.m. Morning Break

Pre-Function Hallway

10:30 – 11:30 a.m. ■ Breakout Session 5

Creating Conditions for Accountability

Laura Thro, MPS

Captain

This workshop explores accountability as a relational and systemic process shaped by organizational structures, professional roles, and institutional expectations. Grounded in restorative practice and trauma-informed frameworks, we will examine how accountability is supported—or limited—by factors such as policy requirements, time constraints, risk management considerations, and performance measures alongside individual beliefs, professional stress, and uncertainty in complex cases. Participants will engage with applied case scenarios and guided reflection to better understand how systems and practitioners can work together to strengthen accountability outcomes. The session emphasizes practical, adaptable strategies for aligning policies, facilitation approaches, and organizational culture to support responsibility, repair, and sustained behavior change while maintaining safety, ethical practice, and system integrity.

Meeting Survivors Where They Are: Esperanza United's Advocacy Approaches for Supporting Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence

Angie Mejia, Ph.D., Esperanza United

Harvest A

Immigrant survivors of domestic violence often navigate language barriers, complex service systems, and uneven access to resources. This session draws from the daily practice of advocates at Esperanza United and reflects an intersectional approach to advocacy that centers community knowledge alongside institutional resources. It will share how community-based advocacy can help reach survivors who may not always have access to traditional office-based services. This includes meeting survivors in trusted community spaces and building relationships with culturally specific organizations and local networks. These practices recognize that safety planning needs to go beyond formal systems and requires advocates to work collaboratively across community spaces and partnerships. Through a small group activity, participants will practice locating and vetting culturally specific and hyper local supports. We will also review publicly available tools to help immigrant survivors navigate complex systems.

Incorporating Child Support Services into Protective Order Processes – Collaborating for Safety

Nicole Ross & Ambrosia Mosby-Velasco, Ramsey County; Maria Maier, St. Paul & Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Intervention Project

Garden City Ballroom

While many courts have legal authority to order child support when establishing or modifying an order for protection, few courts include that relief for survivors. Even when child support is addressed in a protection order action, enforcement of that order is a burden placed upon the survivor. This workshop will highlight a recent collaboration between the St. Paul Intervention Project (SPIP) and Ramsey County Child Support Division which emphasizes obtaining child support obligations in the order for protection process and aims to promote financial stability for survivors. This initiative prioritizes survivor-led decision-making and creates an opportunity to equalize the imbalance of power for survivors in the child support process. Participants will learn about the collaboration's development, key lessons learned, and data results. The workshop will also present a best practice model that other counties and jurisdictions can adapt and replicate.

11:45 a.m. Closing Remarks | Conference Closing

Carriage Hall

Return to the general session space for a quick 2026 OJP Conference Closing where we will be drawing for several exhibitor-provided prizes as well as our final drawing – free registration to the 2027 OJP Conference! Remember to drop your name tag/lanyard into the box at registration at the end of the day to be entered for the drawings. You must be present to win.

Continuing Education Credits

2026 CEU Session Title	Presenter	Time	CLE	SW	POST
BREAKOUT SESSION ONE: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.					
Creating a Strong Partnership Between Victim Witness and Advocacy Organizations	Christie Larson & Nancy Yates	60		1	
Extreme Risk Protection Orders: Legal Process, Implementation, and Best Practices	Rana Alexander, Esq. & Bridget Liverca	60	1	1	1
How can I trust your apology if you can't even say what you did? A Conversation About Apology Letters Focused on Victim, Survivor, and Advocate Insights	Chris Godsey	60		1	
Centering Survivor Voice: Survivor Advisory Councils at DV shelters	Holly Henning & Jake De Vera	60		1	
The Era of Digital Danger	Emma Schroer & Stephanie Randolph	60		1	1
At the Intersection of Erasure: Black and Indigenous Women Missing from the Same Systems	Alla Hassan & Tawny Savage	60	1	1	1
BREAKOUT SESSION TWO: 1:30-3:00 PM					
Under a Watchful Eye: Child Abuse in Youth-Serving Organizations	Alison Feigh, MS	90		1	
Designing for the Margins: Systems Change that Strengthens Victim Services for All	Katie Meinhardt	90		1	
Building Resilient Communities: Minnesota's Approach to Human Trafficking Prevention and Trauma-Informed Education	Anne LaFrinier-Ritchie & Andrea White	90			
MN DOC's Restorative Justice (RJ) Pilot Project: Use of RJ Approaches to Address Violence & Effect Culture Change	Sarah King & Tito Campbell	90		1	
Collective Care in Movement Spaces	Hunter Beckstrom & Lakeisha Lee	90		1	
Intimidation of Domestic Violence Victims	Scott Miller & Rhonda Martinson	90		1	1
State Responses to Labor Trafficking	Nigel Perrote, Caitlin Orgon, Bobbi Jo Pazdernik, Amanda Lager, & Treye Kettwick	90	1	1	
BREAKOUT SESSION THREE: 3:30-4:30 PM					
Help Shouldn't Hurt: The Hidden Barriers Survivors Face in Healthcare	Joanna (Jo) Bolte	60		1	
Financial Exploitation of Older Adults	Marit Peterson & Betsey Mevissen	60	1	1	
"Women Cry Silently at Home": Understanding and Addressing Family Violence in the Somali-American Community through Culturally Specific Research	Fartun Weli & Dr. Leso Munala	60		1	
Justice Through Unity: Elevating Survivor Safety with Strategic Partnerships	Rosilyn Steinkamp & Katrina Wagner	60		1	
Mass Violence Incident Response: The Victim Service Professional's Role	Siri Lokensgard, DeAna Smith, & Cece Olson	60		1	
Collaborative Strategies to Recover Wages for Labor Trafficked Workers	Siv Dobrovolny, Andrea White, & Griselt Andrade	60	1	1	1
Enhanced Notifications for Victims of Sexual Violence Post Conviction	Heather Kolling	60		1	
BREAKOUT SESSION FOUR: 6/4/26; 8:30-10:00 a.m.					
Ethical Considerations in Mandated Reporting	Michelle Harris	90	1	1	
Rural by Design: Why and How We Measure Needs Differently	Katelyn Page & Briana Theising (MNCASA)	90		1	
Stronger Together: Shakopee Police Department's Multi-Disciplinary Approach	Missie Boone, Payton Somerville, MSW, LICSW, & Jamie Pearson, Chief of Police - Shakopee PD	90		1	1
Animal Advocates: Unleashing Compassion. The Vital Work of Facility Dog Teams in the World of Criminal Justice and Beyond	Elizabeth Eagle & Keli Trautman	90		1	
Unseen Survivors: The Experiences of Criminalized Women and Gender-Diverse Survivors of Gender-Based Violence	Anne Applebaum, Flora Whitfield, Natalie Pollard, & Andrea Carrier	90	1	1	
BREAKOUT SESSION FIVE: 6/4/26; 10:30-11:30 a.m.					
Creating Conditions for Accountability	Laura Thro, MPS	60		1	
Meeting Survivors Where They Are: Esperanza United's Advocacy Approaches for Supporting Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence	Angie Mejia, Ph.D	60		1	
Incorporating Child Support Services Into Protective Order Processes – Collaborating for Safety	Nicole Ross, Maria Maier, & Ambrosia Mosby-Velasco	60	1	1	1
TOTAL APPROVED HOURS			8	27	7
			CLE	SW	POST

Continuing Education Credits

Continuing Education Units are available for self-submission to the following:

Agency	Units Applied/Approved	Code/Sponsor ID
MN POST Board 	7 (other)	09424-00089
MN Board of Social Work 	27	CEP 137
MN Continuing Legal Education 	8 (standard)	Event Code 548345

2026 OJP Conference on Crime & Victimization Speaker Biographies

Rana Alexander, Esq., has worked in the domestic and sexual violence field since 1997. She joined the Hennepin County Attorney's Office in 2024 to coordinate their Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) response and provide training on domestic and sexual violence. Before joining Hennepin County, Rana worked as an attorney for Standpoint for 19 years, providing legal advice and consultation to domestic and sexual violence victims, advocates, and attorneys on legal issues that affect domestic and sexual violence victims. She also trained and conducted outreach to attorneys on issues of domestic and sexual violence and the law. Rana is a graduate of Northeastern University School of Law in Boston, Massachusetts, and received with distinction a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology and a minor in Women Studies from Iowa State University.

Griselt Andrade is the Lead Attorney for the Agricultural Worker Project (AWP) of Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services (SMRLS). She represents migrant, seasonal, and year-round agricultural workers, temporary agricultural guest workers on H-2A visas, and temporary forestry workers on H-2B visas throughout Minnesota and North Dakota in civil matters regarding employment-related issues. She also provides legal support to agricultural workers who have experienced labor trafficking, ensuring their rights are protected and they have access to critical legal remedies and support services.

Anne Applebaum is the Director of WATCH Advocacy and Programming at The Advocates for Human Rights. Anne is an attorney with a background in immigration law as well as housing and economic justice policy related to survivors of intimate partner violence. In her role at The Advocates for Human Rights, Anne focuses on system change work to combat domestic abuse, sexual violence, and sex trafficking. In particular, she advocates for holistic and person-centered responses to gender-based violence, trauma-responsive legal systems, and an end to the criminalization of survival. To inform that advocacy, Anne oversees WATCH, a court monitoring project that documents and analyses the handling of cases involving gender-based violence as well as cases that involve women and gender diverse defendants.

Hunter Beckstrom (he/him) is the Prevention Program Coordinator at the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA). Since joining MNCASA in 2020, Hunter has focused on developing community-level, primary prevention strategies that are rooted within approaches of anti-oppression. Hunter strives to uplift and build capacity for the diverse and comprehensive prevention projects MNCASA members are implementing throughout the state. Hunter has been a part of the anti-violence movement since 2015, when he began pursuing his bachelor's degree from Winona State University. He also has a Master's degree in Gender and Women's Studies from Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Johanna (Jo) Bolte is the Director of Advocacy at Someplace Safe, leading advocates across nine counties who provide trauma-informed support to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and other crimes in rural Minnesota. Jo brings a dual background as a former nurse with 15 years of clinical experience and as a sexual assault and domestic violence advocate, including Prison Rape Elimination Act work supporting incarcerated survivors. This combined experience across healthcare and victim services provides critical insight into systemic barriers survivors face when seeking medical care, while informing practical, trauma-informed strategies that reduce risk, strengthen safety, and center survivor autonomy and long-term healing.

Missie Boone, CA, is the Victim and Community Services Coordinator for the Shakopee Police Department. She previously spent nearly six years as a Domestic Violence Program Coordinator with a community-based agency in Steele County. A 2020 graduate of the Minnesota Victim Assistance Academy, Missie holds a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Corrections from Minnesota State University–Mankato and is a credentialed, intermediate-level advocate through the National Advocate Credentialing Program. She brings a multidisciplinary approach to victim services, ensuring victims understand their rights, reporting options, and available resources while navigating the criminal justice system and community supports.

Jaime Bremseth is the founder and president of the Carter Bremseth Memorial Foundation. Carter was her first born, and becoming his mom was one of the greatest moments of her life. She is blessed to have two more children to spend her days with; but the ache of Carter's death has never gone away. She is also a mental health professional, working primarily with children and adolescents; and those in crisis situations. She is very passionate about mental health, especially helping children and adolescents become the best version of themselves. She feels strongly about spreading HOPE, teaching children how to grieve the losses in their lives and is transparently sharing Carter's story to reduce stigma around suicide and mental health.

Tito Campbell is a Restorative Justice Specialist for the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC). In his role with the DOC, Tito led a restorative justice pilot project that employs incarcerated individuals as restorative justice mentors working on preventing and reducing violence in prison facilities. He is the point person for all restorative justice councils in Minnesota DOC facilities. Tito created and supports a Restorative Justice Committee, an advisory group of formerly incarcerated individuals. He is justice-impacted himself having served 13 years in the Minnesota state prison system. While incarcerated, he was a Restorative Justice Council Member for 10 years, where he was able to learn and teach about restorative justice to the prison community and serve as a peer mentor and treatment unit coordinator. Tito is a conduit for change and hopes to create a safer and more restorative prison environment through restorative justice/restorative practices. "We are not the labels you put on us."

Andrea Carrier is a Cree First Nations descendant with family ties to the White Earth Band of Ojibwe. She serves as Community Advocacy Coordinator for the White Earth DOVE Program, supporting survivors and strengthening community-led responses. Her background includes extensive advocacy work in roles such as Sexual Assault Advocate and Law Enforcement Victim Advocate Liaison. For more than five years, she has served as Anishinaabe Sexual Assault Response Team Coordinator (ASART), helping build a coordinated, culturally grounded response to sexual assault across systems. She completed the Tribal Court Legal Advocate course with the National Tribal Trial College at the University of Wisconsin–Madison Law School and has recently trained as an expert witness, strengthening her ability to advocate effectively in complex legal settings. As a survivor, Andrea heals through advocacy by turning lived experience into steady, compassionate action and a voice for others.

Valerie (Val) A. Clark is the research and evaluation supervisor at the Minnesota Department of Corrections. Her research has focused on prisoner reentry, prison programming, and victimization.

Jake De Vera is the Associate Director at Women’s Advocates. He directs and supports the organization’s core service departments and assists the executive director in developing expansive agency goals for survivor-centered advocacy on the macro level. In his previous Director of Development roles with Women’s Advocates and Ain Dah Yung Center, Jake’s fundraising skills contributed greatly to the successful capital campaign that enabled the creation of Mino Oski Ain Dah Yung, a permanent supportive housing project for homeless youth in St. Paul. He has a passionate interest in sociocratic forms of leadership and is currently working with Women’s Advocates staff to reimagine organizational structures away from standard hierarchical formats.

Siv Dobrovolny investigates labor exploitation for the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry and has successfully recovered back wages for labor trafficked individuals. Siv partners with organizations that can provide advocacy services and support to walk alongside individuals while investigations are underway resulting in better outcomes for workers. Most recently, Dobrovolny presented at the Minnesota Association of Agricultural Educators conference.

Grant Duwe is Research Director for the Minnesota Department of Corrections, where he develops assessment instruments, forecasts the state’s prison population, and conducts research studies and program evaluations. He is the author of two books and more than 100 peer-reviewed publications on a wide variety of topics within corrections.

Elizabeth Eagle joined the CornerHouse team in 2018, bringing a strong educational background that includes undergraduate degrees in law enforcement with a focus on community violence prevention and intervention as well as a Master’s degree in Criminal Justice from Metropolitan State University. She enjoys collaborating with multidisciplinary team professionals to enhance system responses and provide effective support when addressing cases involving individuals who report acts of violence and abuse. Elizabeth is dedicated to advocating for a holistic understanding of complex issues and values innovation through the integration of expert perspectives to achieve better outcomes for children and families.

Alison Feigh, MS, is the Director of the Jacob Wetterling Resource Center, a program of Zero Abuse Project. In her 25-plus years of advocacy, she works to help prevent child abuse and abductions. Alison’s work also includes writing curricula for youth-serving organizations, including the Expanding Child Abuse Project curriculum. She is the author of two children’s books and co-author of a textbook, “Sex Crimes and Offenders: Exploring Questions of Character and Culture.” She was awarded the 2024 Visionary Voice Award from the National Sexual Violence Resource Center and the 2025 Distinguished Alumni Award from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.

Flora Whitfield has over a decade of experience in nonprofit and social services, specializing in roles where she can empower individuals and strengthen communities through trauma-informed, person-centered, and culturally responsive approaches. She has led work across advocacy outreach, housing stability, case management and strategic planning to drive sustainable change. Her current role as the Interim Emergency Service Manager at Cornerstone Advocacy Services, allows her to lead and create environments where individuals and communities can heal, grow and thrive.

Chris Godsey started working in the Minnesota Department of Corrections Restorative Justice Program and co-coordinating its apology letter process in January 2022. He also spent 20 years as a college writing teacher and 15 years as a domestic violence intervention dialogue facilitator.

Michelle Harris conducts forensic interviews and trains professionals on basic, advanced, and vulnerable adult focused forensic interviewing and customized topics at CornerHouse. She has presented at national and international conferences, including at the Dallas CCAC and International Child Abuse Conference. Michelle worked for children's advocacy centers in Florida and Wisconsin and was a child protection worker for eight years, conducting over 3,000 forensic interviews and hundreds of abuse investigations. She has extensive experience in court testimony and over a decade of experience in community outreach working with at-risk youth, mentorship, crisis intervention, child abuse assessment, and prevention activities.

Alla Hassan serves as the Violence Prevention and Training Coordinator for the Missing and Murdered Black Women and Girls Office. In this role, Alla is building the office's training infrastructure from the ground up, developing culturally specific curricula across law enforcement, healthcare, child welfare, and community audiences. Alla's work centers racial equity, systems accountability, and closing the gap between policy intent and community impact.

Holly Henning is the Executive Director at Women's Advocates. She is an enrolled member of Marten Falls Anishinaabe First Nation with paternal connections to Constance Lake Oji-Cree Nation. Prior to joining Women's Advocates, Holly served as Associate Director at Ain Dah Yung Center for homeless Indigenous youth, supervising culturally specific shelter, housing, Safe Harbor and street outreach programs. She was a key figure in designing the coordinated entry system that connects homeless youth with permanent housing in Minnesota and developed curriculum for supporting sexually exploited youth. As a survivor with lived experience of domestic violence and homelessness, she ensures that Women's Advocates remains a survivor-centered, survivor-led organization.

Treye Kettwick is an Assistant Ramsey County Attorney assigned to the Minnesota Human Trafficking Investigators Task Force with the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. In his position, Treye collaboratively supports statewide operations in a coordinated effort to stop trafficking and exploitation. He has worked in criminal prosecution for over 17 years and serves as an adjunct faculty member with the University of St. Thomas School of Law.

Sarah King, MA, is the Restorative Justice Coordinator for the Minnesota Department of Corrections. In this role, she is responsible for the people, programs, and priorities of the DOC's Restorative Justice Program. Sarah has over a decade of experience as a restorative practitioner ranging from local to international contexts and specializes in applying restorative practices in cases of severe harm. Sarah has a Master's in Conflict Transformation and Restorative Justice from the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University.

Heather Kolling is the Sexual Violence Specialist in the Victim Services and Restorative Justice Unit at the Minnesota Department of Corrections. In her role, she provides support to both incarcerated victim survivors of sexual violence and those in the community. She has nearly a decade of advocacy experience working with victim survivors, predominantly in community-based advocacy programs. She holds a Master's Degree in Victim Services Management and a Bachelor's Degree in Victim Studies from Sam Houston State University. Heather has a passion for bridging the gap between community and systems-based stakeholders to improve support for victim survivors.

Anne LaFrinier-Ritchie, White Earth Anishinaabe, works as a Safe Harbor Regional Navigator for Someplace Safe in West Central Minnesota. Anne has worked in the anti-trafficking field in direct services and training and technical assistance since 2016, with previous experience in advocacy and tribal child welfare. Anne consults on a national level on serving Indigenous survivors and serves on local and national domestic violence and tribal boards Shared Hope JuST Response Council and Minnesota's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives Office Advisory Committee.

Amanda Lager works for the Department of Children, Youth, and Families on the Child Safety and Family Preservation Team as a child safety consultant. In that role, she is responsible for the Minnesota Child Maltreatment, Intake, Screening and Response Path Guidelines and policy work related to human trafficking and child welfare. Amanda has 18 years of experience working in child protection/child welfare, both at the state and local welfare agency levels.

Christie Larson attended St. Olaf College for social work and American University in Washington D.C. to earn her Master's in Public Policy. She also completed Indiana University's School of Philanthropy and is a Certified Fund-Raising Individual (CFRE). Christie has worked in a variety of social service fields, including transitional housing, mental health, domestic violence, and family services. She started as the Executive Director at Southern Valley Alliance in 2019 and works with the Board of Directors to oversee the organizational strategy and mission and ensure all domestic abuse programs are performing at an optimal level.

Lakeisha Lee (she/her) is the Statewide Medical Forensic Policy Program Coordinator (SMFPP) at the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault. Her work focuses on strengthening Minnesota's medical forensic response through survivor-centered policy development, systems coordination, and statewide collaboration. Lakeisha brings years of community advocacy and lived experience to the anti-violence movement, working to improve systems that serve survivors and their families. She holds a degree in Criminal Justice with a minor in Community Development and Organization from Metropolitan State University. Her work centers community voice, dignity, and healing, advancing policies that promote safety and accountability across Minnesota.

Bridget Liverca joined the Hennepin County Attorney's office in May 2025. Bridget has a Bachelor's degree in Community Health Education from Minnesota State University-Mankato. After college, she worked with employment for people with disabilities and as a compliance manager. For the next nine years, she worked with a nonprofit contracted with Hennepin County doing disability waiver case management, most of which she served in a supervisory role overseeing areas of mental health, brain injuries, developmental delays and co-occurring conditions in adults and children. Additionally, Bridget volunteers as a Moms Demand Action Chapter Leader and a Be SMART presenter/volunteer. She organizes tabling events to hand out gun locks and educates the community; as a Be SMART presenter, she presents on safe storage options for firearms in community spaces as well as suicide prevention.

Siri Lokensgard received her Master of Social Work from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis. As the Director of the Domestic Abuse Service Center, Siri manages a multidisciplinary unit offering services, such as culturally specific advocacy, assistance in obtaining OFPs, pro bono legal consultation and representation, and a prosecution team. Siri has conducted trainings on the legal remedies for domestic violence victim/survivors, trauma-informed legal advocacy at the IVAT Summit in Hawaii, and secondary and vicarious trauma among providers at the National Association of Social Workers Conference in Minnesota.

Maria Maier is the supervising attorney at the St. Paul & Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (SPIP). Maria practiced in the area of family law for over a decade before joining SPIP in 2018 as an attorney in the civil legal department. In addition to representing participants in protective order and family court cases, she holds weekly legal clinics to serve the needs of pro se litigants. Maria has been involved with the SAVES pilot since inception in both creating protocol and as a participating attorney representing petitioners requesting child support.

Rhonda Martinson is a consultant and trainer on criminal justice responses to domestic violence (DV). In recent years, she's presented workshops on courthouse witness intimidation, coordinated community responses to witness intimidation, and how victim advocates can help DV victims who are being intimidated. She's written articles, reports, and training materials on witness intimidation. From 2010 to 2013, Rhonda was an attorney at AEquitas: The Prosecutor's Resource on Violence Against Women. She presented on trial strategy, legal analysis, and policy and provided case consultation for prosecutors and others. She also managed AEquitas's initiative "Improving Justice System Responses to Witness Intimidation" for which Duluth was a pilot site.

Katie Meinhardt is an advocate for equity and anti-violence within the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing (DDBHH) community. As the Advocacy Coordinator at ThinkSelf Minnesota Deaf Adult Education and Advocacy, she works to promote access and support for DDBHH individuals experiencing domestic violence and sexual assault, aiming to empower them and ultimately "work herself out of a job." With 16 years of direct service experience in a variety of roles, Katie brings a unique perspective to advocacy and support within the Deaf * community.

Angie Mejia, Ph.D., is Community Advocacy Manager at Esperanza United, where she works alongside immigrant survivors and families navigating domestic violence, sexual violence, housing instability, and other barriers to safety and wellbeing. Before joining Esperanza United, Angie was a researcher and tenure-track professor, laying a strong academic foundation for her community-based work. Trained as a sociologist, she brings a survivor-centered and culturally responsive lens to advocacy. Her experience spans direct service, public health research, violence prevention, teaching, and community engagement.

Betsy Mevissen is the victim services team manager at the Minnesota Elder Justice Center. She leads a group of advocates and attorneys in direct advocacy and presents nationally on person centered support for older adults who have experienced abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Scott Miller has worked for Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs since 2000. Serving in various roles over the years, such as facilitator of men's non-violence classes, system advocate, and coordinated community response (CCR), Scott has been instrumental in the work in Duluth to respond to domestic violence (DV). He also trains nationally and internationally on these topics. Between 2010 and 2013, Scott co-coordinated a federally funded project to study witness intimidation in DV cases. Scott also works independently as an expert witness in criminal and civil trials to explain how abusers' tactics and risks generated by battering are linked to behaviors of victims.

Ambrosia Mosby-Velasco is an Assistant County Attorney III in Ramsey County with experience in criminal defense, prosecution, and child support enforcement. Her work focuses on supporting the child support program and serving families by establishing paternity, obtaining right-sized child support orders, and collecting and modifying child support while providing legal guidance to staff. Working within a department that is grounded in equity and a “whole family” approach, she is committed to achieving fair outcomes that promote stability and improve overall outcomes for families and children in Ramsey County. Ambrosia participated in the SAVES grant pilot program, collaborating with the state child support office, other counties, enforcement professionals, victim advocates, attorneys from the St. Paul & Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Intervention Program, and community partners to help develop procedures allowing temporary child support orders to be obtained during Order for Protection hearings. Together, they built a framework that is now informing similar efforts in other jurisdictions.

Dr. Leso Munala is an Associate Professor in the School of Nursing at the University of Minnesota. Her research focuses on gender-based violence across the lifespan.

Julie Marie Muskat is a freelance dancer, choreographer, teacher, and stage manager currently based in the Twin Cities and originally from Texas. She has worked across the U.S., Israel, and Italy, dancing with companies such as Threads Dance Project, Rhythmically Speaking, Vox Medusa, Revolution Dance Theatre, Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company, and Compagnia AiEP. She is the founder of Deeper Water Arts & Mind/Body Center, which provides dance, cross training, and health and wellness opportunities for young people and adults. She is also working as the office administrator and operations and technology manager for two I/O psychology consulting firms.

Cecelia (Cece) Olsen is the domestic violence community navigator for the Minneapolis Police Department. Her job includes assisting domestic violence victim survivors in Minneapolis. She provides advocacy services, assists in obtaining OFPs, provides referrals to other community agencies, and acts as a communication bridge between Minneapolis Police and the community. She is an active member of the Family Violence Coordinating Council and sits on multiple other committees focused on bettering service response. Cece also assists with training all new Minneapolis police recruits on policies, procedures, and best practices for dealing with domestic related 911 calls.

Katelyn Page is the Minnesota Sexual Assault Response Team (MNSART) Program Coordinator with over 12 years of experience supporting victims and survivors of sexual assault. Her advocacy began at St. Cloud State University. She previously worked with Men as Peacemakers, facilitating the Domestic Violence Restorative Circle Program, where she helped offenders take accountability while supporting survivors and their families. Additionally, Katelyn has served as an advocate and housing case manager in rural Northern Minnesota, assisting survivors with housing, medical, and legal needs. She is also an active member of the Olmstead County Mobilizing Olmstead Voices for Equity Committee, working to advance equity and justice in her community.

Nova is the facility dog for the Stearns County Attorney’s Office. She and her handler, Keli Trautman, have worked with hundreds of crime victims and witnesses since 2019, having completed extensive training and certifications required to work with people who have been affected by crime and are now interacting with prosecutors. Nova sits quietly for hours, providing emotional support to both children and adults during all stages of the court process. She is very intuitive, compassionate and knows when she is needed most.

Caitlin Orgon is the Human Trafficking Prevention Projects Coordinator at the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). She graduated from Bemidji State University in 2016 with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. Following her studies, she dedicated herself to service through AmeriCorps and the U.S. Peace Corps in Thailand. In March 2024, she joined MDH, bringing with her five years of experience working with survivors of human trafficking at a nonprofit in Bemidji. Her expertise also includes significant work with Native American youth, current and former foster youth, and shelter/housing initiatives.

SAIC Bobbi Jo Pazdernik of the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension has over 32 years of law enforcement experience, which includes 18 years as an undercover state narcotics agent and the last 10 years investigating and now supervising the Predatory Crimes Section. In 2017, SAIC Pazdernik created the statewide Minnesota Human Trafficking Investigators Task Force, which she built to over 50 members that reach from corner to corner in the state.

Jamie Pearson is a dedicated law enforcement executive with two decades at the Shakopee Police Department, currently serving as Police Chief. Chief Pearson holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from St. Cloud State University and completed the Law Enforcement Skills Program at Alexandria Technical College. She graduated from Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command and earned a Basic Emergency Management Certificate in 2024. Over the course of her career, she has served as a Patrol Officer, D.A.R.E. Officer, Field Training Officer, Investigator, Sergeant, and Captain, and was on the Scott County Drug Treatment Court team for 10 years. She is committed to community partnerships, public safety, and leadership grounded in integrity.

Nigel Perrote works at the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families as the American Indian Human Trafficking Program Specialist. In this role, he provides department direction in strategic planning and delivery of culturally appropriate services to meet the needs of American Indian and Alaskan Native youth at risk or who are being sex and/or labor trafficked.

Marit Peterson is the associate director of the Minnesota Elder Justice Center, where she has worked since 2015. She is a member and past chair of the Elder Law Section of the State Bar Association and sits on the steering committee for WINGS MN.

Natalie Pollard is a survivor, advocate and dealer of hope. She is a WATCH project advisor for the Advocates for Human Rights and in her role can help others navigating journeys similar to hers, give purpose through empowerment and inspire people going through even the darkest moments, that there is light waiting to be found.

Stephanie Randolph is a Forensic Interviewer and Trainer at CornerHouse in Minneapolis. She earned her Master of Counseling from MidAmerica Nazarene University and worked as a forensic interviewer and trainer in Kansas City, Missouri, before joining CornerHouse in 2019. Stephanie has conducted around 2,000 forensic interviews involving cases of suspected sexual abuse, physical abuse, witness to violent crimes, and sexual exploitation. She has also trained hundreds of multidisciplinary team members globally on best practices in forensic interviewing and emerging issues in child abuse. Prior to CornerHouse, she worked as a Victim Assistant Specialist with the Jacob Wetterling Resource Center.

Nicole Ross is a Child Support Specialist Senior and team lead at Ramsey County Child Support with over 19 years of experience in the field. Since starting in 2007, she has developed expertise in order setting, paternity establishment, stipulations, and enforcement. Nicole holds a B.A. in Criminal Justice with a minor in Sociology and is known for her compassionate, respectful approach to working with families. She leads special projects, mentors peers, and currently spearheads two initiatives under the SAVES grant focused on improving child support services and client safety.

Anika Rychner is Interim Executive Director of Community Action Center in Rice County, Minnesota. With more than 20 years of nonprofit leadership experience, her work spans food access, housing stability, and victim services. Her work at CAC focuses on equity-centered, trauma-responsive programs that strengthen community partnerships and support nearly 18,000 residents annually.

Cira Sanchez is the Vice President of Family Services at Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (CLUES). She earned a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the City College of New York and brings more than 25 years of experience in the field of domestic violence. Earlier in her career, she served for eight years as a Child Protective Services (CPS) worker in New York City. In her current role, she leads and oversees programs, including domestic violence and sexual assault advocacy, housing services, and community-based parenting and case management programs. Her work focuses on connecting individuals and families with supportive services and stable housing opportunities, including advancing the Housing First model for survivors of domestic violence.

Emma Schroer, M.A., joined CornerHouse as a Child and Family Advocate in 2019 and became part of the Forensic Interviewing and Training team in 2021. She holds a Master's degree in Human Services with an emphasis in Forensic Behavioral Health from Concordia University in St. Paul and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology with minors in Legal Studies and Political Science from Beloit College. Before CornerHouse, Emma worked at a youth residential treatment facility, where she helped design and implement an Aftercare Program to support adolescent boys reintegrating into their communities and reduce recidivism.

DeAna Smith serves as the Division Manager for the Hennepin County Attorney's Office, where she oversees victim services within the Adult Prosecution Division, Youth Prosecution Division, and the Domestic Abuse service Center. Deana served as a member of the Hennepin County Fatality Review Team and Family Violence Coordinating Council and was a certified national trainer for the Blueprint for Safety. As a member of the Constance Currie Scholarship Committee at the Paul and Sheila Wellstone Center, she helps people in the community further their post-secondary education. Deana also spent several years coaching youth softball and volleyball.

Tawny Smith-Savage serves as the Violence Prevention Coordinator for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives Office. She leads statewide prevention education and community engagement efforts. Her work focuses on helping communities to identify pathways to build awareness and support survivors and families impacted by violence. She has been a social worker for 28 years and is dedicated to building safer communities.

Payton Somerville, MSW, LICSW, earned her Master of Social Work from the University of Minnesota. Payton serves as a member of the Scott County Coordinated Response Team and an embedded social worker within the Shakopee Police Department. Her professional experience ranges from outpatient therapy settings, inpatient mental health units, and domestic violence centers. Payton is passionate about building a relationship between law enforcement and mental health services. She is proud of the department's efforts to decriminalize mental health and meet members of the community with the support they need to thrive.

Erica Staab is the Executive Director of HOPE Center in Faribault. HOPE Center serves all of Rice County and strives to help victims of sexual and domestic violence, stalking, and trafficking through the four pillars of Healing, Outreach, Prevention, and Education. Erica has spent the last 27 years advocating on behalf of domestic violence and sexual assault victims at the local, state and national level. She is a Social Worker, Massage Therapist, Spiritual Director and author of the book, "She Stays," which examines domestic and sexual abuse and helps with community education. She has advocated for policy change at the national level, worked for the South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, is an expert witness in criminal trials for sexual assault and domestic violence and 2026 recipient of the NSVRC MN Visionary Voice award, and believes wholeheartedly in the power of collaboration to help create a better world.

Rosilyn Steinkamp serves as the Youth Program Coordinator at the Women's Shelter and Support Center, a role she began in 2024. She holds a diploma from Stewartville High School and brings over a decade of leadership experience as a Branch Manager, where she also facilitated diversity and inclusion trainings. At the shelter, Rosilyn leads presentations, group sessions, and trainings at rehabilitation facilities, universities, detention centers, resource fairs, and community panels. She collaborates with local law enforcement and community partners to support those impacted by domestic violence. Rosilyn is passionate about prevention education, community engagement, and empowering people through inclusive, trauma-informed programming.

Stuffy is the facility dog for CornerHouse. He has been making a difference in the lives of children and families at CornerHouse since he started working there last year. His calming presence, unwavering support, and gentle spirit help create a brave and comforting environment for those navigating difficult moments. He works alongside his handler, Elizabeth Eagle.

Briana (Bree) Theising has advocated for ending sexual violence by focusing on prevention rather than reaction since 2013. Her work emphasizes education, community engagement, and challenging harmful cultural norms before violence occurs. Bree believes lasting change requires equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to recognize risks, intervene safely, and build cultures of respect and accountability. Through proactive strategies and collaborative efforts, she works to create communities where sexual violence is prevented before it happens and strives to create safer environments and foster conversations that shift societal attitudes. Her advocacy is rooted in compassion, resilience, and a deep commitment to long-term change.

Laura Thro, MPS, is a community healing strategist, restorative practices practitioner, trainer, and founder of Thro Kindness. She partners with community organizations, justice systems, and families to support accountability, healing, and relationship-centered responses to harm. Laura facilitates restorative parenting circles, community circles, and accountability circles and workshops that center safety, dignity, and repair. Her work emphasizes practical application of restorative and trauma-informed principles within real-world systems. Most recently, Laura has presented interactive trainings and workshops for community-based organizations, justice-adjacent professionals, and statewide audiences focused on restorative practice, accountability, and systems alignment.

Keli Trautman is a Paralegal/Victim Witness Coordinator and Facility Dog Handler at the Stearns County Attorney's Office, where she has worked for over 18 years. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from St. Cloud State University. In 2019, Facility Dog Nova joined the office, living with Keli when not on duty. Outside of work, Keli enjoys spending time with her husband, twin daughters, and their other golden retriever, Dru. She is involved in her church as a youth group leader and participates in the Miss Sauk Rapids and Miss Sartell Organizations

Katrina Wagner has served as the DVIP Coordinator at the Women's Shelter and Support Center since 2017. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Winona State University. In her role, she oversees Crisis Response Advocates and the Court and Advocacy Program, providing leadership to a multidisciplinary team supporting survivors of domestic violence. Katrina collaborates closely with law enforcement, prosecutors, Legal Aid, public defenders, immigration support offices, and sexual assault advocacy agencies to strengthen community responses. She specializes in trauma-informed care, safety planning, and cross-sector partnerships and regularly provides training to shelter staff and community partners focused on collaboration and survivor-centered support.

Emilyn Wahl is the Director of Parenting Time Centers at Someplace Safe, overseeing multiple supervised parenting time programs across west central Minnesota. She brings more than two decades of experience working with court-involved families, high-conflict dynamics, and victim-centered systems. Emilyn regularly trains staff, Child Protection teams, and multidisciplinary partners on trauma-informed practice, professional boundaries, documentation, and safety-based decision-making. She has presented for the Supervised Visitation Network, the Association of Families and Conciliation Courts, and other statewide and international audiences. Emilyn is known for practical, ethics-driven guidance grounded in real-world system impact.

Fartun Weli, MPH, MAPP, is a culture broker and the CEO and founder of Isuroon, a community-based organization dedicated to addressing the health and well-being of Somali women and families in Minnesota.

Andrea White is the Safe Harbor Regional Navigator for Southeastern Minnesota. She is housed within Dodge, Fillmore, and Olmsted County Victim Services, which provides advocacy and support to victims of crime, sexual assault survivors, trafficking victims, and sexually exploited youth. For over a decade, Andrea has worked in the anti-violence field and received the Rising Star Award from the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault in 2021 in recognition of her contribution to the prevention of sexual violence throughout Minnesota. She has experience facilitating training across the state and nationally for providers and community members on Safe Harbor, human trafficking, and exploitation. She recently presented at the Minnesota Children's Alliance Voices for Safety Conference.

Nancy Yates has served as a victim witness coordinator with the Carver County Attorney's Office since 1997. In 2019 she was promoted to the Victim Witness Manager. Nancy graduated from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science in 1995. Her degree focused on social work. Thereafter, she graduated from the Minnesota Paralegal Institute with a Paralegal Certificate in 1996. Nancy is trained as a crisis counselor and in forensic interviewing. Her strength is working with vulnerable victims, and she is particularly skilled in coordinating all facets of the criminal justice system.

