

PRE-FORUM Presenter Biographies

Gary L. Aschenbach, Sr.

Gary Aschenbach is a talented, motivating, and internationally recognized instructor with over 25 years of experience as an investigator, supervisor, and instructor with the Maryland State Police. Since retiring in 1998, he has offered training, consultations, and investigations through Law-Tech Consultants, LLC. After graduating from the police academy, his assignments included routine road patrol, extensive undercover operations, and supervision. He also served on the governor's protection detail and was eventually assigned as lead instructor for the State Police Bureau of Drug and Criminal Enforcement.

Bryan D. Carr, M.Ed.

Bryan Carr is an independent training consultant and presenter, formerly with Deisinger Consulting, LLC, a professional services firm specializing in operational psychology, behavioral health, and behavioral threat assessment. He helps clients evaluate threatening circumstances, manage situations, mitigate the risk of violence, and enhance the safety and practices of their organizations. His formal educational training includes a Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of Virginia and a Master of Science in Counselor Education from Virginia Commonwealth University. He has a postgraduate professional license in school counseling and an administration and supervision/central office endorsement through the Virginia Department of Education. Until his retirement in 2019, he served as the Coordinator of School Counseling Services in Chesterfield County Public Schools (CCPS). Before a career in counseling administration, he served as a high school teacher, athletics coach, school counselor, and high school counseling director. In addition to developing and supervising the school counseling program in CCPS, he was a leader in writing and implementing the district's threat assessment and management protocol. Dr. Carr and his colleague, Dr. Jim Russo, created the CCPS threat assessment and management training program, educating hundreds of administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, and law enforcement partners on best practices and strategies to keep students, staff, and community members safe. He has presented at several workshops, lectures, and conferences on the role of school administration and student support personnel in promoting student achievement, social/emotional learning, and safety. These presentations have taken place across Virginia, including at the Virginia School Counselors Conference, the Virginia Counselors Association Convention, the Virginia School Board Association Convention, and the Schools of Education at the University of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, and the College of William & Mary.

Capt. Jason Cornwell

Jason Cornwell is the Captain of the School Safety Division for the Frederick County Sheriff's Office. He began his career in law enforcement in 1999. He worked in the patrol division for the first part of his career, advancing through the ranks and working as a supervisor on each shift. In 2017, he moved into the administrative ranks, overseeing the School Safety Division. Since taking over the division, he has successfully implemented numerous programs in Frederick County, including Career Day, the Criminal Justice Career and Technical Education program, High School Internship, and Back the Blue – Tribute Tuesdays. He is a member of the Division Threat Assessment Oversight, Division Safety, and Mobile Crisis Teams. His other primary duty with the Frederick County Sheriff's Office is leading the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team. He joined the SWAT team in 2002 and became the team leader in 2017. He is also an instructor of firearms, defensive tactics, Stop the Bleed, and Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE). He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice, a Graduate Certificate in Organizational Management, and a Master of Arts in Management. He has earned the FBI-Law Enforcement Executive Development Association (LEEDA) Trilogy Award. He believes partnerships are one key to success. He has had the opportunity to provide debriefs and speak about partnerships at several state and national conferences.

James Russo, Ed.D.

Dr. Jim Russo is an educational training consultant and presenter. He has most recently worked with Dr. Gene Deisinger, President of Deisinger Consulting, to train schools and divisions on threat assessment teams and processes consistent with the *Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines* developed by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). Dr. Russo is also a licensed trainer with the International Institute for Restorative Practices and provides training and consultation to schools and divisions in implementing restorative practices. His formal educational training includes a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, a Master of Science in Psychology, an Educational Specialist degree in School Psychology from Radford University, and a Doctor of Education degree in Counseling and School Psychology from the College of William & Mary. Until his retirement in 2018, he served as the Coordinator of Psychological Services in Chesterfield County Public Schools (CCPS). In addition to his CCPS responsibilities for developing and supervising the school psychology program, Dr. Russo was a leader in writing and implementing the district's threat assessment and management protocol. He and his colleague, Bryan Carr, created the CCPS threat assessment and management training program, educating hundreds of administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, and law enforcement partners on best practices and strategies to keep students, staff, and community members safe. During his employment in Chesterfield, his additional work experiences included graduate-level teaching, adjunct instruction for Mary Baldwin College, and private clinical practice as a licensed clinical psychologist (licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Psychology).

PRE-FORUM Presenter Biographies (Continued)

Dr. April Szilagyi

Dr. April Szilagyi obtained her undergraduate degree from Indiana University in her home state. After completing her bachelor's degree, she worked for a home-based organization that counseled at-risk youth and families involved with the Department of Social Services. She then sought to pursue a Master's Degree in Forensic Psychology, which brought her to Northern Virginia. Dr. Szilagyi obtained her doctoral degree in clinical psychology in 2014, and, since that time, she has expanded her practice to working with different forensic populations. She currently has a private practice located in Winchester,

Virginia. She takes many referrals from the Virginia and West Virginia courts, attorneys, various local Social Services Departments, police departments, and local school systems. She regularly provides expert testimony in courts in Virginia and West Virginia. She is a Certified Sex Offender Treatment Provider (CSOTP) in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and works extensively with the offender population. Dr. Szilagyi has specialized in working with individuals who have committed sexual offenses since 2007. She has been interviewed as an expert in forensic psychology by shows such as *Reasonable Doubt* and *Very Scary People* on the Discovery ID Network.

MAIN-FORUM Presenter Biographies

Sarah Bazemore

Sarah Bazemore is the School Counseling Specialist within the Office of Student Services at the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Prior to joining the VDOE, she was a school counselor, school counseling coordinator, behavior interventionist, special education teacher, and middle school math teacher. Additionally, she has served as an adjunct professor at Virginia Commonwealth University and was the Virginia School Counselor of the Year in 2019. Ms. Bazemore works with school divisions and school counselors throughout the state to encourage best practices in the development of students' academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs.

Colton Easton

Colton Easton joined Safer Schools Together (SST) in 2016 after receiving a degree in Law Enforcement Studies. In his current role as Director of Project Development, he works closely with SST CEO/Founder Theresa Campbell in the development and implementation of training and services. He is an accomplished trainer, having presented to thousands of individuals from organizations across North America, including the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and numerous other law enforcement agencies, K-12 school districts, and higher education campuses. He began his time at SST as a Threat Analyst where he gained invaluable experience and knowledge collecting social media data that is used to assist Safety/Threat Assessment teams in conducting accurate threat assessments.

Steven MacDonald

After receiving a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Victoria, Steven MacDonald specialized in language analytics and artificial intelligence for major media corporations in the Tech Industry. This experience and knowledge in both technology and the world of social media have helped him develop a more hands-on approach to working with schools, communities,

and law enforcement, with the ability to assist in data collection and accurate threat assessments for school districts nationwide. As a trainer, he provides presentations and workshops on topics such as Digital Threat Assessment®, Cyberbullying, and Current Online Behavioral Trends and Updates. He is focused on helping schools and communities stay safe.

Andre Simons

Andre Simons is a Capital Partner at VanSlyke O'Neill Law, based in Washington, DC, where he specializes in workplace violence prevention and threat management. He retired from the FBI in 2019 as a Supervisory Special Agent in Quantico, Virginia. He was a certified FBI Profiler in the Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU), specializing in active shooter prevention, response, and research. He served as the Unit Chief of the BAU's Behavioral Threat Assessment Center, Cyber Behavioral Analysis Center, and the Crisis Negotiation Unit. He was also certified as Adjunct Faculty through the University of Virginia's School of Continuing and Professional Education. He continues training security stakeholders on targeted violence prevention and response. Following his career with the FBI, he worked as a Principal for Control Risks Group in Washington, DC. He helped clients navigate crisis situations and develop workplace violence prevention programs. In this capacity, Mr. Simons partnered with multiple corporate threat management teams to keep employees safe and in alignment with industry best practices and standards. He has co-authored numerous works on targeted violence, including the landmark report, *A Study of the Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters in the U.S.* (2018), *The Assessment of Anonymous Threatening Communications* (2021), as featured in *The International Handbook of Threat Assessment*, and *Publicly Humiliating Events: A Precursor to Workplace Violence?* (2024). He is a Certified Threat Manager (CTM®) and the 2019 recipient of the Distinguished Achievement Award from the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP). He continues to work as a Research

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Contractor for the FBI on active shooter matters, and is a member of ATAP's Training and Certification Committees. He is currently the National Chair of the Certification Committee for ATAP. He received his master's degree in counseling psychology from Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon. Before joining the FBI, he served as a member of the Portland Police Bureau's Crisis Intervention Team, assisting people with mental health issues in crisis.

Shawn VanSlyke

Shawn VanSlyke is a security professional with over 20 years of experience as a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and seven more years in private security consulting. He is a Capital Partner at VanSlyke O'Neill Law, based in Washington, DC. He is a longtime attorney who obtained his law degree from Cleveland-Marshall College. He has been a member of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Bar Association since 1999, and a member of the Washington, DC Bar since 2024. He is a recognized expert in violence preparedness, prevention, and response in the workplace. Recently, as a Principal in the Crisis and Security Consulting practice of Control

Risks, Mr. VanSlyke developed and led a team that provided elite consultative services focused on assisting organizations in bolstering preparedness and resilience. He has vast experience in assisting companies across industries with the development, implementation, and execution of best-practice level Workplace Violence Prevention and Response (WVPR) and Active Assailant preparedness programs. He regularly created and facilitated C-Suite-level crisis management simulation exercises for clients across all major industries to identify planning gaps and improve capabilities. His earlier career as an FBI Special Agent included subject matter expertise and leadership roles with the national crisis negotiation and behavioral analysis programs. His vast and specialized experiences in responding to high-profile crisis situations on a global level qualify him as one of the country's foremost experts in assessing situations of concern and crafting comprehensive threat mitigation strategies. He is also an ASIS Certified Protection Professional (CPP) and has contributed to the Workplace Violence and Active Assailant–Prevention, Intervention and Response Standard (ANSI/ASIS WVPI AA 2020).