



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES

VICTIMS SERVICES NEWS

September 2020

MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Kristina Vadas, *Victims Services Manager*

Since our last newsletter in April, so much has happened in our Commonwealth, our country, and the world. Sadly, we continue to deal with a pandemic that has claimed too many lives and sickened millions. We witnessed horrific violence against Black people. And just recently, some Virginia communities were severely damaged by Hurricane Isaias and tornadoes.



Even with all of this pain and hurt, we've also seen extraordinary empathy, altruism, and compassion. People have risked their own health and safety to care for and support others. We've witnessed the amazing power of activism to create change. I join with many others in unequivocally affirming that Black Lives Matter.

As an agency, under the leadership of Director Shannon Dion, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) is committed to both internal and external anti-racism work. Last year, we began efforts to address and dismantle harmful systems in which we play a role. These efforts continue, as there is still much work to be done.

The DCJS Division of Programs and Services (which includes Victims Services) is also participating in the second cohort of the Underserved Populations Learning Collaborative (UPLC). Members of the DCJS team include: Tom Fitzpatrick, Division Director; Greg Hopkins, Juvenile Justice Program Coordinator; Andi Martin, Sexual and

Intimate Partner Violence Program Coordinator; and Chrissy Wengloski, Victims Services Grant Program Specialist. I am thrilled that we have a UPLC team and look forward to the information and changes they'll bring to our division and agency.



In response to the pandemic, the Victims Services team continues to work remotely. Our monitoring team has shifted to virtual Enhanced Desk Reviews, and a variety of online training opportunities have been developed. You can find all upcoming training/events here:

www.dcss.virginia.gov/training-events. We have also scheduled our next Victims Services Quarterly Conversation for Tuesday, October 6, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. This time, we're asking people to please register in advance here <https://www.dcss.virginia.gov/eventRegistration/register.cfm?eventid=3432>

In closing, I want to acknowledge that I know all of you have been impacted in various ways by these recent events. You're dealing with a lot personally, all while continuing to serve people who are traumatized.

Please remember to take care of yourself, too. I am truly grateful for the work that you do. Thank you.

Kristina

The Victims Services Team is offering many virtual training opportunities!

See the full list of DCJS training and conferences:

www.dcss.virginia.gov/training-events

Paws with a Cause – Therapy Dogs International

Tricia Everetts, Training and Grant Program Coordinator



If you have attended a DCJS Victims Services conference, you may have noticed some special four-legged attendees. At both the Intersections of Violence Conference and the Envisions Conference, therapy dogs/handler team volunteers from Therapy Dogs International (TDI) Chapter 152 provided companionship and comfort for interested conference participants. The material covered in a victim services training can be emotionally taxing and potentially triggering for some attendees. In order to provide additional support to those attendees, the TDI dogs were available to those attendees who wished to partake of some “fur therapy.”

Founded in 1976, TDI is a nonprofit, volunteer-based organization comprised of volunteer handlers and their therapy dogs. The handler/dog teams visit many places to provide companionship and comfort and also respond for disaster stress relief such as the Oklahoma City Bombing in 1995, the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, as well as to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The teams provide nonjudgmental emotional support to both survivors and first responders. There are over 24,750 handler/dog teams registered with TDI throughout all 50 states and parts of Canada. In order to join, the dogs must undergo a testing and certification process through a certified evaluator. All dogs must be at least one year of age and pass a temperament test, and the dog's health must be certified on an ongoing basis by a veterinarian. There are many local Chapters of TDI which respond to the needs of their community through scheduling visits to local facilities, and participating in local events.

In Virginia, TDI Chapter 152 has been in existence since 1998. It covers the geographical area from



Hampton to Williamsburg to Gloucester. Currently, the chapter has 30 active members according to Jean Nohle, Group Leader. Besides volunteering to provide support at DCJS conferences, the chapter also visits churches, nursing homes, libraries, reading programs at local schools, hospitals, infusion centers, cancer centers and more. Some of these teams also volunteer with the Williamsburg and Yorktown Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) office. The Chapter volunteered at the mass shooting in Virginia Beach last year and the dogs provided support to city employees, crisis responders, and visitors to the memorial site. The Chapter has been training with Newport News Fire and Rescue so that the dogs can be accustomed to the smells and sounds of the equipment and vehicles to assist in responding to a variety of emergencies. The Chapter also spends time educating the community about therapy dogs and what they do and why. Ms. Nohle presented for the Commonwealth of Operating Room Nurses last year and said the dog/handler teams work a lot with families and victims. According to Ms. Nohle, "We find that a lot of victims just want to talk to the dog and tell them their story. We visit the Merrimac Detention Center once a week and the children love them and of course, the dogs love the children. The older ones will take a dog and go off and just talk to them and tell them their story. We will place a counselor within hearing distance so they can hear the conversation and know how to help the child. They will tell the dog what they won't tell a counselor. The dogs have time to give their full attention to whoever needs them, they listen and they do not judge."



Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the teams were visiting local fire stations, 911 call centers, police stations (after a local law enforcement officer was killed in the line of duty) and a TV station (reporters often have to report on crisis and tragedies and appreciate being able to find comfort with the dogs). The COVID-19 pandemic has caused TDI to suspend all volunteer visits, which has been hard on the dogs who enjoy their work and miss going on the volunteer visits. They are all looking forward being able to offer a helping “paw” again.

If you would like to learn more about TDI, you may visit their webpage at www.tdi-dog.org.

Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) Guidelines During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Chad Felts, *Victims Services Grant Program Specialist*

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the protocols (social distancing, quarantine, etc.) implemented to limit the spread of the virus, the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) has developed a set of guidelines for Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) practitioners. LAP is an innovative evidence-based strategy designed to prevent domestic violence and intimate partner homicides and serious injuries. The program provides law enforcement agencies and their community partners with an easy and effective method of identifying victims of domestic violence who are at the highest risk of being seriously injured or killed by their intimate partners, and then providing those victims with access to help and assistance.

Times of high stress, unemployment, and economic uncertainty can lead to a significant increase in the number of intimate partner violence (IPV) incidents. It is the position of MNADV that participating law enforcement agencies and domestic violence service providers should continue to implement LAP screenings and assessments, when they can be done without jeopardizing the health and safety of the people administering the screenings and the victims responding to the screens.

Due to current circumstances across the country, many IPV victims are confined at home with their abusers. As always, law enforcement officers are encouraged to exercise their

best judgment if they decide to initiate a screening while the abusive partner is present at the location. A screening should only be administered if the officer has enough privacy with the victim to ask the questions and speak to the hotline counselor without the offender overhearing or watching.

Further, officers and LAP practitioners should follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and maintain six feet of separation from the victim. Actions should also include taking any necessary hygiene measures when contacting the hotline partner, such as using gloves and/or hand sanitizer while working with a victim. If using their personal or department-issued phone to contact the hotline, officers should disinfect the device immediately after use. Finally, officers and LAP practitioners should always inform the victim that they are taking these measures for the safety and well-being of all parties involved, and pursuant to CDC and department/agency guidelines.

During these trying times, the importance of LAP screenings is greater than ever. By following recommended health and safety measures, law enforcement officers and other LAP practitioners can continue to provide help and assistance to victims of IPV in a welcoming and secure setting.



Innovative Program Thrives During Pandemic

Jennifer Kline, *Improving Criminal Justice Responses Program Coordinator*

There are many fears that victims experience after a sexual assault—fear of not being believed, fear of retaliation for reporting, fear of a hostile criminal justice system, and fear of having to re-live the assault, among others. Now, victims have an additional fear that can keep them from receiving medical care after an assault – COVID-19. During this time of social distancing, victims want to avoid hospitals because they are worried they might contract the virus.

During normal circumstances, Chesapeake Forensic Specialists (CFS) has an advantage over traditional hospital-based forensic medical programs because of its specialized services, trauma-informed spaces, and dedicated staff. Now, during the pandemic, when victims do not want to go to a hospital emergency department



after a sexual assault, CFS continues to see sexual assault victims at its two facilities. One facility is in Chesapeake

(Continued)

“Innovative Program Thrives” *(Continued)*

and the other is a new clinic at the Norfolk Family Justice Center.

Sometimes, after a sexual assault, victims will go to their closest hospital emergency department for medical care. In those cases, the hospital will call CFS. Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE), Jennifer Knowlton says, “We have great relationships with all of the ERs.” If after traveling to their local emergency department, the victim does not want to travel again to one of the CFS locations, one of the CFS SANEs will do the exam at the hospital. CFS SANEs travel to all of the 13 surrounding hospital emergency departments to do forensic examinations, sometimes going as far as Southampton County and the Eastern Shore hospitals near the Maryland border.



Knowlton says, “If we can get them out of the hospital, it’s a better exam and a better experience for the patient.” The confidential, quiet and calming atmosphere of the CFS facilities immediately puts victims at ease, which is a stark contrast to the hustle and bustle of a busy emergency room, which can re-traumatize victims. CFS also has more comfortable and better-equipped exam rooms that result in better medical care and evidence collection. At the Norfolk Family Justice Center, CFS occupies a suite that is discrete and private, but it’s also in the same building as all of the other professionals that serve victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, including law enforcement, prosecutors, victim advocates, and social services. This one-stop approach makes it more convenient to connect survivors to the resources they need for support and recovery.

CFS is the only stand-alone, 24/7, forensic medical program that serves victims of sexual assault (ages 13 and up) in Virginia. In addition, CFS is expanding services by

providing domestic violence/intimate partner violence exams, as well as non-fatal strangulation exams. They have conducted over 370 forensic medical exams in the past year. Knowlton says that they have seen a lot more victims that want to stay anonymous during the pandemic. Victims



access exam services by contacting law enforcement, local advocacy agencies, or hospitals. After reporting options are reviewed, if the victim decides (s)he does not want to make a police report, an exam and Physical Evidence Recovery Kit (PERK) can still be completed. The evidence will be stored for two years (and up to ten years at the victim’s request), in case the victim decides in the future that they would like to make a police report.

Even if the victim does not want to make a police report, CFS SANEs do their best to connect the victim to an advocate. Knowlton says that they understand the importance of victims having an advocate who can provide victim-centered services depending on the victim’s needs and circumstances. CFS serves on all of the area Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs) and have strong partnerships with all of the organizations that provide services to victims. Knowlton says “I know I can pick up the phone at any time of the day or night and someone will answer and not be mad that I’ve called.”

To learn more about Chesapeake Forensic Specialists go to: <http://cfs-sane.com> or email Jennifer Knowlton at jennifer@cfs-sane.com

“If we can get them out of the hospital, it’s a better exam and a better experience for the patient.”

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

VOCA Public Awareness Items, Program Supplies, and Trinkets

Amia Barrows, Victims Services Grant Monitoring Team Supervisor

In an effort to clarify the review process for allowable administrative costs requested by VOCA sub-recipients, the below guidance discusses the definitions of public awareness items, program supplies, and trinkets.

Definitions

Public Awareness/Outreach Items:

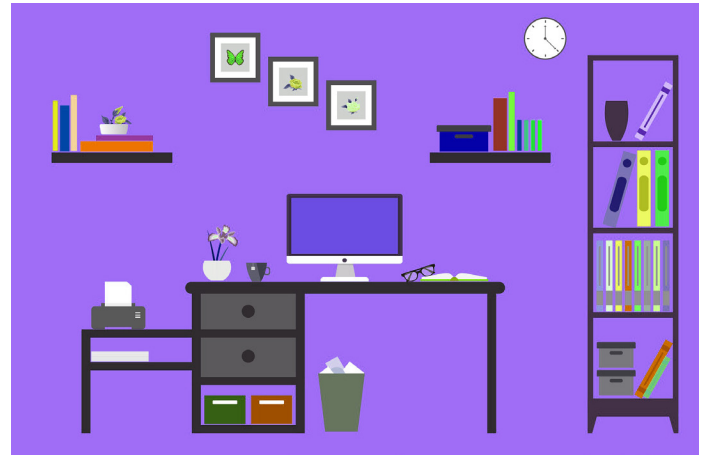
Public awareness and outreach materials are items needed by sub-recipients to provide the general public with information about the services offered by the project and how to access those services. These items must include contact information for the sub-recipient program. Sub-recipients must justify the need for these items, and describe how they will be useful as an additional method to make sure information about their services reaches victims. Items in this category are allowable.

Examples of public awareness/outreach items may include: tabletop displays, brochures, banners, pens, magnets, project-specific items (e.g., bar coasters for sexual assault outreach). These items differ from trinkets/giveaways in that the intended purpose is to provide information about program services and to reach victims. In determining this difference, it may be helpful to think about the items' usefulness for that purpose. For example, as allowable items, a domestic violence agency may distribute nail files or lip balm printed with contact information; these items are discreet, can be hidden/disguised, and may be useful in reaching victims. The same is not true of a hat or mug printed with this same information.

Program Supply Items:

Program supplies are items needed by sub-recipients to fulfill project goals and objectives. These supplies are often essential to the implementation of funded projects. Sub-recipients must justify the need for these items and describe how they are necessary to ensure project success. Items in this category are allowable.

Examples of program supply items may include: journals, workbooks, therapeutic resources, worksheets, stress balls, art supplies, play therapy items (toys, stuffed animals, dolls, figurines, etc.).



Trinkets/Giveaway Items:

Trinkets or giveaway items are items that serve no project purpose. These are not allowed to be purchased with VOCA funds.

Examples of trinkets or giveaway items may include: mugs, t-shirts, hats, gift bags, "thank you" gifts for speakers, memorabilia, commemorative items, conference giveaways.

Allowable and Unallowable Costs:

For more information on allowable and unallowable costs/activities, please see the Allowable and Unallowable Costs chart on the DCJS website. For additional guidance, please see 28 CFR Part 94, Subpart B-VOCA Victim Assistance Program at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/07/08/2016-16085/victims-of-crime-act-victim-assistance-program#h-55>

VOCA Final Rule:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2016-07-08/pdf/2016-16085.pdf>

DOJ Grants Financial Guide:

www.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh241/files/media/document/DOJ_FinancialGuide_1.pdf

VSTOP AGENCY SPOTLIGHT Legal Aid Works – Fredericksburg, Virginia

Tierra Smith, Victims Services Grant and VSTOP Coordination Specialist



Legal Aid Works of Fredericksburg, Virginia

Legal Aid Works of Fredericksburg, Virginia, has been providing free, high quality legal services for low-income clients, since 1973. The organization assists community members in 17 mostly-rural counties stretching from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Chesapeake Bay. Currently, Legal Aid Works operates three offices providing free legal services in non-fee generating civil matters to those who cannot afford an attorney. The organization also collaborates with a host of local community service providers to deliver comprehensive services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as coordinate trainings and community outreach efforts.

Within the Commonwealth of Virginia, there is a significant justice gap as there is only one legal aid attorney for every 7,000 indigent clients. Legal Aid Works has identified this need within its service area, and with the aid of DCJS grant funds, has worked extensively to provide "...a holistic approach to representation of domestic violence survivors." Without these comprehensive legal services, victims would have to navigate a complex legal system alone. Legal Aid Works makes sure that victims of domestic violence and sexual assault are able to obtain civil protective orders, custody, and child/spousal support. In addition to representation of victims of abuse, the staff attorneys represent clients to prevent homelessness (evictions/foreclosures), obtain public benefits, and address debt collection matters. In an effort to further promote justice for all, Legal Aid Works also serves as the only local legal aid organization in Virginia that regularly accepts undocumented victims for representation in their application for immigration relief under the VAWA or U Visa processes. This is an essential activity, which is partially supported through a DCJS Virginia

Sexual and Domestic Violence Victim Fund (VSDVVF) Grant. Moreover, the staff is involved in macro level work by being an active part of the local DV/SA task forces and frequently conducting Know Your Rights trainings for clients and task force members.

As a VSTOP grantee and recipient of other DCJS funds, Legal Aid Works has been able to provide a multitude of legal services to individuals and families that have been impacted by sexual assault and domestic violence. To date, the organization's five VSTOP funded attorneys provide services to approximately 100 individuals annually. The Executive Director comments that the receipt of VSTOP funds has allowed civil protective order cases to become a program priority and has expanded coordination and cross-referrals with other related service providers to include SAFE, Empowerhouse, RCASA, and the Haven programs within their service areas. In addition, the organization has been able to work more closely with the criminal prosecutors of the abusers and gain more encouragement from them for the victims to pursue civil protective orders and for the perpetrators to pursue batterers' intervention classes. Through a comprehensive approach to service delivery, Legal Aid Works is able to fulfill their mission to "...champion fairness by advocating for those with the least access to the civil justice system."

Victims Services Quarterly Conversation

The next Victims Services Quarterly Conversation (VSQC) will be held on Tuesday, October 6, 2020, from 3:00pm–4:00pm. Register in advance for the VSQC here: <https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/eventRegistration/register.cfm?eventid=3432>

Please mark your calendars—we hope you can join us!

The PowerPoint™ slides from past VSQC may be found on our website at: www.dcjs.virginia.gov/publications

VICTIM/WITNESS AGENCY SPOTLIGHT Hampton Victims Services Unit

Dione Bassett, Victims Services Program Specialist

Thank you!

DCJS would like to take a moment to recognize every member of the Hampton Victim Services Unit (HVSU) for their heartfelt, creative, and inspirational representation honoring National Crime Victims' Rights Week and City of Hampton homicide victims this past spring. Sending a huge thank you for their foresight, courage, and hard work.

The love and strength of the victims' families and their advocates are apparent in Hampton's first edition of "Breaking Bread – Our Lives on a Plate". The vision and work of Anthony George and Keyanna Young, both of the Hampton Victim Services Unit, are appreciated and applauded. To create this virtual and hard copy cookbook, the team coordinated with the families of homicide victims who provided favorite recipes and quotes.

In addition, HVSU participated in efforts to acknowledge and support sexual assault victims by sending pictures to DCJS for Teal Thursday. They posted important information regarding Sexual Assault Awareness Month and "Why We Advocate" public service announcement messages on their Facebook page (www.facebook.com/hamptonvictimwitness).

Director of HVSU, Karla Reaves, emphasized that everything they did for Victims' Rights Week 2020 was a team effort. Ms. Reaves said, "We recognize that we not only represent our office, we represent the City, State, and Federal Government. It is important to me that whatever we do to enhance and increase awareness efforts for Victims' Rights, everyone who plays a role, shines!"

A huge congratulations goes out to Ms. Karla Reaves, who was selected by the Office of the Attorney General for a 2020 Unsung Hero Award. This honor is very well-deserved! Ms. Reaves is also a singer – here's a link to one of her beautiful songs: https://youtu.be/lnp_JpwpmzY

In addition to their Victim Witness grant, HVSU receives a DCJS Victims Services Grant Program award for their RESET program, which is a coordinated effort to address the effects of homicide on families and communities by providing vital resources.



Lastly, this amazing team also took the time to honor their longtime volunteer, Mrs. Barbara King, by doing a "ride-by" during the pandemic. Mrs. King has served as a volunteer with the HVSU for 13 years, and was a recipient of a 2017 Unsung Hero Award from the Office of the Attorney General.

Thank you, Mrs. King, for being an inspiration to all of us!

Keep healing. Stay kind. Be awesome. We see you!

"The planet does not need more successful people. The planet desperately needs more peace-makers, healers, restorers, storytellers and lovers of all kinds."

–David W. Orr

Helpful DCJS Victims Services Links:

[Victims Services Grants](#)

[Grants Management Resources](#)

[Forms](#)

[Publications](#)

[Professional Standards](#)

[Victims Services Staff](#)

During the July 22, 2020 meeting of the Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence, members of the committee voted to adopt the following position statement:

Virginia Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence POSITION STATEMENT

July 22, 2020

The Virginia Statewide Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence stands for justice and equity for all, and we stand in solidarity with the diverse communities we represent. We believe all people have a right to live without oppression and we condemn the violence and racism that plagues our country. We are committed to incorporating a lens of anti-racism and equity into our work as an advisory committee.

We recognize that engaging with systems of law enforcement and criminal justice is not always the safest option in every situation for victims and survivors, particularly for communities of color. We commit to support and encourage local jurisdictions to investigate and adopt varying models of community based and dual response that are comprehensive and seamless and help to ensure that safety and justice is provided for all.

The time is ripe to seek solutions that can better respond to sexual and domestic violence. We are encouraged by the public demand for change and the intentional focus on dismantling systemic racism. The Committee recognizes the work of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance and their [policy recommendations for Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence programs](#), particularly those that intersect with the [Virginia Legislative Black Caucus policy recommendations](#).

We are dedicated to examining our own internal structures in an effort to better understand how these may reinforce systems of oppression and further suppress the voices of people of color. We commit to permeate this committee's decision-making and recommendations with those voices that have been historically marginalized and unheard.

In short order, the Virginia Statewide Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence will do the following:

- Work to adopt and institutionalize a best practice model of Community Response Teams (CRT) in all jurisdictions and provide on-going assessments of criminal justice responses. We commit to having the voices of those impacted by sexual and domestic violence as a part of the governing body of the CRT.
- As the 2020 statutory requirements for membership of the committee are very limiting and uncondusive to a diverse membership, the Committee will pursue legislative changes to prioritize more diversity and more representation from people of color who are impacted by sexual and domestic violence and/or state violence.
- Change the 2020 statutory requirements of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee to prioritize more diversity and more representation from people of color.
- Continue to recommend and support legislation and funding in primary prevention programs that move efforts to end sexual and domestic violence upstream.
- Work with state partners and sexual and domestic violence funding entities to ensure that the state's infrastructure for sexual and domestic violence prevention and response is supportive of emerging and innovative practices that address the comprehensive needs of survivors and advocates in the field.

Crisis Response: Virginia Beach One-Year Anniversary

Julia Fuller-Wilson, Violence Against Women Program Administrator and State Crisis Response Coordinator

Let's be honest, 2020 has been a rough year. We have encountered and endured so many things in the last six months, and we are all struggling to maintain a sense of normalcy and calm. With so much happening, we must not forget our fellow Virginians that carry one additional burden – the loss of their family members, friends, and co-workers on May 31, 2019, in Virginia Beach. This load is extra heavy, and we want them to know that we acknowledge their hurt and support their healing.

Anniversary events bring up so many emotions: grief, pain, love, loss, and hope for the future. It is even more difficult when you add a health crisis and social distancing mandates to the situation. However, with great ingenuity and thoughtfulness, the City of Virginia Beach created an anniversary commemoration to remember. Though most of the commemoration events were virtual, the City also beautifully decorated Building #2 to honor the victims that were killed one year ago. Twelve large flower pots and



light beams adorned the front of the building in honor of each of the victims lost on that day. As a result, the community had a place to come to connect with others and grieve. It was a beautiful tribute on a very somber day.

Members of the Virginia Crisis Response Team (CRT) were there to offer support and resources to the City workers impacted, families and friends of those killed or injured, and the community at large. On the anniversary, members of the CRT were moved by the strength of the community. We were humbled by the hope of those who had likely experienced one of the most devastating events of their lives just a year ago. We were encouraged by the City's thoughtful determination to make the anniversary meaningful and special. Above all, we were honored to bear witness to the growth, connectedness, and resilience that Virginia Beach continues to embody.

We remember you.

#VB Strong

Trauma-Informed Community Networks (TICNs)

Chrissy Smith, Victims Services Grant Program Specialist

Virginia is working to become a trauma-informed state by recognizing the impact of trauma and adverse experiences across the lifespan and through generations.

Family & Children's Trust Fund of Virginia (FACT) built a framework for communities to establish Trauma-Informed Community Networks (TICNs). FACT defines a TICN as a "group of residents and organizations or entities representing diverse perspectives across neighborhoods and sectors in a geographically-defined community that are leveraging the science of adverse childhood experiences and trauma to build relationships, convene regularly, and advance a common agenda around resilience."

TICNs are encouraged to pull representatives from all aspects of the community: schools, faith-based organizations, health care providers, local businesses, and government agencies. The goal is to use the science of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), practice, and policy to address the unique needs of the community with a comprehensive systemic approach. Some communities may have a high rate of poverty while others may have a higher immigrant population, resulting in each TICN developing their own specific mission statement.

Currently, there are over nineteen TICNs across the state, with some being well-established and others new and emerging. To find the TICN in your area, please check:

<http://www.fact.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Virginias-Trauma-Informed-Community-Networks-PDF.pdf>

To learn more about building a TICN, please see: <http://www.fact.virginia.gov/fact-framework/>

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Andrew Kinch, *Victims Services Grant Program Specialist*



Share a little about your educational and professional background.

I moved to Richmond in 2009 to pursue a Master's of Public Administration at Virginia Commonwealth University. Shortly thereafter, I began working at

the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (also known as the Virginia Victims Fund) as an administrative assistant. After completing the MPA curriculum and taking on various roles at CICF over a seven year stretch, I joined the Victims Services team in my current position as a Grant Monitor.

What is your role at DCJS?

I am the Victims Services Grant Monitor responsible for the Shenandoah region's recipients of Victims Services Grant Program (VSGP), Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Victim Fund (VSDVVF), Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP), Victim/Witness Grant Program (VWGP), and Virginia Services, Training, Officers, Prosecution (VSTOP) grants. Like other grant monitors, I am tasked with providing guidance and technical assistance to my assigned grantees as well as reviewing reports and checking to ensure compliance with grant guidelines. I am also the Crisis Response Team (CRT) Coordination Specialist, mainly to support the State CRT Coordinator with preparation and response to criminal mass casualty events.

Why were you interested in working for Victims Services at DCJS?

During my time at CICF, I became more familiar with the activities of victims services providers and learned about the funding sources procured by DCJS to distribute to agencies throughout the Commonwealth. The DCJS Victims Services team helps support a wide variety of those programs, so it appealed to me as a way to continue working in the field while also broadening my professional skill set and increasing my awareness of activities supporting victims of crime.

What do you enjoy most about your work at DCJS?

I've really enjoyed the travel to different parts of the state and connecting with the people whose work is directly strengthening their communities.

What has been your proudest accomplishment at DCJS?

If I'm answering for our team, it would be the completion of every grant application review period – stressful times for both the team but also for applicants; it always feels like a mountain has been climbed. Personally speaking, undertaking the National Organization for Victim Assistance's 'train the trainer' course felt satisfying to complete.

Prior to working at DCJS, what is the most unusual or interesting job you have had?

Right out of college, I had a few odd jobs but easily my favorite was being an editorial assistant on the Sports Desk at the *Baltimore Sun*. No other job I've had entailed keeping the strange schedule of 5:00pm until about 1:00am every day, with a good deal of emphasis being placed on quickly recording box scores for Maryland high school sports.

When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

Depending on the year, it was either left fielder for the Boston Red Sox or Han Solo.

If you could only vacation one place for the rest of your life, where would it be and why?

Ogunquit, Maine. Growing up on the ocean, I would have to be near the water and any New Englander would know that Maine is 'Vacationland.' Ogunquit is one of the first places my wife and I visited together so I think about going back often.

What would you title the autobiography of your life?

...And you may ask yourself, 'Well how did I get here?'

For a complete listing of all DCJS Victims Staff Members, please see page 13 of this newsletter

Equitable Access to Sexual Assault Response and Resources

Jennifer Kline, *Improving Criminal Justice Responses Program Coordinator*

Victims vary by social class, spiritual beliefs, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, gender, age, literacy and other aspects of their identity. In order to provide equitable response, Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART) cannot provide equal response. Response and resources should be customized to meet the needs of each victim. SARTs can improve their response and resources by looking carefully at the needs of specific populations. By evaluating the current response, SARTs identify those barriers and gaps in the system that prevent victims from receiving an equitable response.

The first step in evaluating the current response is to have a discussion with your team to identify underserved and marginalized groups in your community. Pose these questions to your team: What groups are more vulnerable to sexual assault in our community? What groups are least likely to report sexual assault? What groups are least likely to be believed? What groups are most likely to disengage from the criminal justice process? What programs exist in the community that serve these populations, including refugees, people with disabilities, LGBTQ, non-English speaking populations, black and brown communities, poor or isolated communities?

Additional ways to evaluate your community's response:

- Form a committee of your SART to identify your underserved populations and how to reach those populations.
- Invite leaders from underserved communities to serve on your SART and/or your underserved populations committee. Some examples are: religious leaders, public housing organizations, programs that serve LGBTQ, refugees, or people with disabilities.
- Do a survey or focus group with victims and/or organizations to learn what resources will assist in the investigation, support, and prosecution of cases involving marginalized victims.
- Look at census data to learn about the make-up of your community.
- Discuss training gaps and opportunities to learn about underserved and marginalized populations. Invite an organization to teach your SART about specific cultures, religions, or nationalities and why they are more vulnerable to sexual assault or underreporting.

- Look at innovative practices in other communities to give your team ideas on how to best reach marginalized populations. Send out your questions on the Virginia SART Google Group or the National SART Google Group.

Take the information that your team learned from the evaluation and use it to plan and implement ways to improve your response and services to marginalized and underserved populations by:

- Including services for non-English speaking victims, including language lines, interpreters, or Spanish-speaking staff.
- Translating educational materials about your community's sexual assault response and placing materials in organizations where underserved populations are prevalent.
- Planning and implementing ways to improve transportation services for victims to receive SANE exams, attend counseling or court hearings.
- Enhancing public awareness resources with specific emphasis on dismantling the stigma of mental health services and identifying culturally-specific support groups or healing activities in your community.
- Educating the communities about how they should react when victims disclose sexual assault and where they can refer victims for services.
- Identifying the strengths of underserved populations, such as family or spirituality, and thinking about ways those strengths can be used to reach victims. Identifying what taboos are prevalent in the culture, how they impact reporting, and how to best educate that community about sexual assault.
- Identifying ways to enhance relationships and build trust between marginalized communities and law enforcement.

When you make improvements to your response and resources, include them in your protocols. It is important to include statements about cultural humility and culturally relevant best practices in writing, for your SART's future guidance and sustainability.

Read the report entitled ["Helping Those Who Help Others: Key Findings from a Comprehensive Needs Assessment of the Crime Victims Field"](#) for more recommendations.

DCJS Sub-Recipient Reminders

Request for Funds:

Requests for most grant programs are processed quarterly. Requests must be preceded by the previous quarter's financial and approved progress reports.

Award Letters:

For FY21 Child Treatment, Victim Fund, Victim Witness, and Victims Services Grant Program (VSGP) award recipients, please remember to submit the signed award acceptance to grantsmgmt@dcjs.virginia.gov.

Reporting Reminders:

DCJS Financial and Programmatic Reports are due within 15 days after the end of each calendar quarter (October 15, January 15, April 15, July 15). Financial reports are required even if no expenditures occurred during the quarter. If the due date falls on a weekend or non-business day, the report is due on the next business day. For project specific reporting requirements, please refer to your award package and/or visit our website: www.dcjs.virginia.gov/victims-services/grants. Note: SASP and VSTOP recipients, please refer to your award package for reporting guidelines. For questions on reporting requirements, please contact your DCJS Grant Monitor.

Budget Modifications:

As stated in the award conditions, any changes to your approved budget MUST be approved by your DCJS grant monitor in advance of funds being obligated and/or expended. There are two ways that budgets can be changed: A budget amendment and an in-line budget adjustment. A budget amendment allows you to move any portion of your award from one budget category to another. No more than two (2) budget amendments will be permitted during the grant award period. Budget Amendments must be requested using the online Grants Management Information System (GMIS), accompanied with a narrative (DCJS Forms). The deadline for all budget amendments to be submitted will be 45 days prior to the end of the grant year. Please review your Special Conditions carefully to determine the requirements and procedures for amending budgets. In-Line Budget Adjustments allow grantees to move money within one (1) budget category. In-line adjustments can be reviewed anytime during the year, but must be approved by your grant monitor prior to the end of the fiscal year and prior to funds being expended. Requests for in-line adjustments can be submitted via email and do not require submission in GMIS. For questions, contact your assigned DCJS Grant Monitor.

Grant Closeout:

The last quarterly financial report of a project using federal funds must indicate any unpaid obligations that may exist at the expiration of the grant award period. The subgrantee has up to 45 days from the end of the award period to liquidate any unpaid obligations and submit a final financial report. The liquidation period exists to allow projects time to receive final invoices and make final payments – no new obligations may be incurred during this period.

Program Staff Changes:

All grant funded programs are required to notify DCJS within 30 days of any personnel changes in the grant funded program (see Grant Award Package). This form must be signed by the Project Administrator only when there are staff changes for the Project Administrator, Project Director, and/or Finance Officer positions. For all other grant funded positions, the Project Administrator's signature is not required. If you have any questions about when or how to complete this form, please contact your Grant Monitor. Please submit the completed form to your DCJS Grant Monitor via email.

Resources:

DCJS Grants Management FAQ: www.dcjs.virginia.gov/victims-services/grant-management-resources

Improving Services to Sexual Assault Survivors: A Look at the Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative (SADI)

Andi Martin, *Sexual Assault/Intimate Partner Violence Program Coordinator*

Last year, I attended a meeting hosted by the Resource Sharing Project. This is where I first heard about the Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative (SADI). SADI was a four-year initiative in which six dual (domestic violence and sexual assault services) agencies from across the United States joined with the National Sexual Assault Resource Center and the Resource Sharing Project to enhance their services and outreach to survivors of sexual assault. Through honest assessment, it became clear that many of these dual agencies relied on internal and external identities that focused on victims of domestic violence, with sexual assault services being somewhat of an afterthought. Working with SADI, these programs learned how they could serve sexual assault survivors with intention and clarity, and with the same focus as that which was committed to victims of domestic violence.

Here are a few lessons learned from SADI:

- Understanding and responding to racism and oppression is necessary for effective sexual assault services.
- Agencies are generally adept at hospital accompaniment and crisis support services for sexual assault survivors. However, sexual assault services should also address the physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of survivors well beyond the initial crisis.
- Successful programs are those that honestly assess themselves and identify where they fall short of sexual assault centered services. They are self-critical, and open to feedback, growth and change.
- Having an organizational identity that is specific to services for sexual assault survivors is imperative for reaching survivors and for providing the needed range of services.
- Agency procedures and job descriptions should have a deliberate focus on sexual assault specific services and knowledge. This includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities within a dual program.
- Successful programs will include stable, empowering and transparent leadership. Additionally, leadership will lift up the well-being of staff, which is necessary to the well-being of the agency and thus the quality of services.

SADI lingers in my head every minute I engage in Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) or Victims Services Grant Program (VSGP) funding planning. Why? Because it is important that we use our resources effectively, and through SADI, these six agencies challenged their assumptions that they were effective. Although SADI focused on enhancing services to sexual assault survivors, the lessons learned through SADI speak to all of us who wish to serve all survivors deliberately and to the best of our ability. For more information about SADI, please see the SADI Final Report. <https://www.nsvrc.org/publications/nsvrc-publications/sexual-assault-demonstration-initiative-final-report>

STAFF LISTING

Tom Fitzpatrick, *Division Director, Programs & Services*

Candace Miles, *Administrative Assistant, Division of Programs & Services*

Victims Services Team

Kristina Vadas, *Manager*

Tricia Everetts, *Training & Grant Program Coordinator (VSDVVF)*

Patricia Foster, *Victim/Witness Program Coordinator*

Julia Fuller-Wilson, *VSTOP Administrator & State Crisis Response Coordinator*

Jennifer Kline, *ICJR Grant Program Coordinator*

Andi Martin, *Sexual Assault & IPV Program Coordinator (SASP & VSGP)*

Anya Shaffer, *VOCA Administrator*

Amia Barrows, *Grant Monitoring Supervisor*

Dione Bassett, *Victims Services Grant Program Specialist – Hampton Roads*

Chad Felts, *Victims Services Grant Program Specialist – Southwest*

Andrew Kinch, *Victims Services Grant Program Specialist – Valley/Northern*

Chrissy Smith, *Victims Services Grant Program Specialist – Western*

Tierra Smith, *Victims Services Grant Program Specialist – North Central*

Chrissy Wengloski, *Victims Services Grant Program Specialist – Southside*

Reporting Potential Fraud, Waste, and Abuse, and Similar Misconduct

Amia Barrows, Victims Services Grant Monitoring Team Supervisor

State administering agencies and sub-recipients play a vital role in fighting fraud, waste, and abuse of grant funds. As stated in the DCJS award conditions, the subgrantee must promptly refer to the DOJ Office of the Inspector General (OIG) any credible evidence that a principal, employee, agent, subgrantee, contractor, subcontractor, or other person has, in connection with funds under this award – (1) submitted a claim that violates the False Claims Act; or (2) committed a criminal or civil violation of laws pertaining to fraud, conflict of interest, bribery, gratuity, or similar misconduct.

Potential fraud, waste, abuse, or misconduct involving or relating to funds under this award should be reported to the OIG by (1) mail directed to: Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of Justice, Investigations Division, 1425 New York Avenue, N.W. Suite 7100, Washington, DC 20530; and/or (2) the DOJ OIG hotline: (contact information in English and Spanish) at (800) 869-4499 (phone) or (202) 616-9881 (fax). Additional information is available from the DOJ OIG website at: <https://oig.justice.gov/hotline>.

The following information was obtained from the DOJ Grants Financial Guide:

Failure to Properly Support the Use of Award Funds

A Federal award agreement creates a legal and binding obligation. Direct recipients and sub-recipients are obligated to:

- Use the award as outlined in the agreement.
- Act with integrity when applying for and reporting the actual use of funds.
- Properly track the use of funds and maintain adequate supporting documentation.

Typical issues involving failure to properly support the use of award funds include:

- Deliberate redirection of the use of funds in a manner different from the purpose outlined in the award agreement.
- Failure to adequately account for, track, or support transactions such as personnel costs, contracts, indirect cost rates, matching funds, program income, or other sources of revenue.

Theft

Theft is the most common issue in almost all organizations – including those that receive Federal awards. Non-federal entities are encouraged to keep the following in mind:

- People who embezzle funds can be extremely creative, while often appearing very trustworthy. These abilities are precisely why they can do so much damage to an organization and remain undetected for extended periods of time.
- Poor or no internal controls provide an opening for theft. A lack of proper separation of duties is one of the most common weaknesses.

Ways to Reduce the Risk of Fraud

There are several things that can be done to reduce or even eliminate the risk of fraudulent use of the Federal award:

- Examine operations and internal controls to identify fraud vulnerabilities.
- Implement specific fraud prevention strategies including educating others about the risks. The more people are aware of the issues, the more they can help prevent problems or detect them as early as possible.
- Maintain a well-designed and well-tested system of internal controls.
- Ensure all financial or other certifications and progress reports are adequately supported with appropriate documentation and evidence.
- Identify any potential conflict-of-interest issues and disclose them to the awarding agency for specific guidance and advice.
- Follow a fair and transparent procurement process, especially when using consultants. Ensure that the rate of pay is reasonable and justifiable, and that the work product is well-defined and documented.

For more information, contact the DOJ Office of the Inspector to report fraud, waste, abuse, or misconduct.

For questions regarding a DCJS grant, please contact your DCJS Grant Monitor.