



# VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES

## VICTIMS SERVICES NEWS

November 2018—Volume 1, Issue 2

### Manager's Message

Kristina Vadas, *Victims Services Manager*

The Victims Services Team has been very busy during the past few months! To highlight just a few things:

- The conference, *Males and Violence: Engaging Men and Boys as Survivors, Advocates, and Change Agents*, was held on September 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. This conference was the first of its kind in Virginia, and the energy and enthusiasm during the two days was inspiring.
- We developed a process to elicit online public comment about the draft Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards and corresponding measures.
- We coordinated two, one-day trainings titled, *Human Trafficking for the Victim/Witness Professional*. Participants learned how to best assist survivors of human trafficking throughout the criminal justice process.
- A two-day Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Summit was held. The first day was primarily training, and the second day was a goal-setting and planning session for SART “next steps” in Virginia.
- Our Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) program manager completed an in-depth “enhanced desk review” of our programmatic and fiscal management of the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding. We compiled hundreds of documents in preparation for the week-long review, and overall, it went very well!



The Victims Services Team also hosted our first Victims Services Quarterly Conversation on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Beyond announcements and updates, we had a virtual discussion about the following question: *What do you see as new or continuing direct service needs for victims of crime in your community/service area?* Thank you to all who participated!

Our next Victims Services Quarterly Conversation will be held on **Wednesday, January 9, 2019, from 11:00am–12:00pm**. Please mark your calendars. Log-in information will be emailed to all grant recipients in mid-December.

And as you may know, John Mahoney retired from DCJS at the end of September. John had been the VOCA Administrator for the past three years, and prior to that, he held a number of different positions in Victims Services here at DCJS. His accolades and accomplishments throughout the years are too numerous to list, but a few highlights include: implementing victims services funding and grant programs throughout Virginia, developing the Virginia

Victim Assistance Academy, and helping to craft the Virginia Crime Victim and Witness Rights Act. Truly, John’s knowledge of victims’ services is unmatched. All of us who have had the pleasure of working with him are better professionals and stronger victim advocates because of his commitment, impact, and wisdom.

Finally, looking ahead to the next few months, the Victims Services Team will primarily be focused on developing the grant application guidelines for the next round of VOCA funding. We thank those of you who completed the survey, as it has provided such useful information. We may also be reaching out to some of you in the coming weeks to obtain your feedback, input, and ideas. Thanks in advance for your assistance!

As always, I welcome your questions, thoughts, and ideas, so please reach out to me at (804) 786-7802 or [kristina.vadas@dcjs.virginia.gov](mailto:kristina.vadas@dcjs.virginia.gov).

Thank you for all that you do to serve and support victims.

*Kristina*

## Program Spotlight

### Southside Survivor Response Center, Inc.

*Empowering Women, Children and Families to Live Free From Violence*

Martinsville, Virginia

Tierra Smith, *Victims Services Specialist*

Southside Survivor Response Center, Inc. (SSRC) of Martinsville, Virginia, is a premier organization in Southwest Virginia geared towards providing diverse services to combat the negative impacts of domestic violence, sexual violence, and homelessness. SSRC is the only organization that provides post-emergency assistance and support program services to victims/survivors in Martinsville, Henry County, and Patrick County. Services include a 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter, crisis intervention, victim advocacy, case management, and counseling, among others.

Following the merging of two non-profit organizations in 2015, Southside Survivor Response Center, Inc. has collaborated extensively with partner organizations to promote their mission of “providing crisis intervention, advocacy, safety services, and education to empower people affected by sexual assault, domestic violence and various crisis situations through community collaboration.” The organization identifies the unique needs of each survivor and thus partners with organizations such as the Piedmont Community Services Board, the Community Dream Center, local churches, and Step, Inc. to optimize their service delivery.

***With a vast scope of services and significant community presence, SSRC embodies the vision of creating “... a community that is empowered to end sexual/domestic violence and equipped to respond to various crisis situations.”***

With funding from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) the organization has been able to expand existing services to include hiring a bilingual advocate to better serve the Latino/a population. This advocate was featured in the October edition of the *National Resource Center on Domestic Violence & National Latino Network Radio Podcast “My One Thing”* series. In addition, funding has allowed for increasing their geographic presence in areas such as rural Patrick County, as well as the implementation of the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) within Martinsville.

During the upcoming year, Southside Survivor Response Center, Inc. plans to continue to provide vital services, to include being one of the first domestic violence hotlines in the nation accredited by CONTACT USA, as well as identifying additional unrestricted revenue streams to offer more flexibility in programming. The staff also anticipates expanding their prevention programming to reach more children and at younger ages.

## Grantee Announcement: SAVE THE DATE

**Friday, April 26, 2019**

9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Richmond, Virginia

Safe Harbor presents, “Building Recovery: Starting a Comprehensive Residential Program for Survivors of Human Trafficking” Conference featuring keynote speaker, Bonnie Martin, M.Ed., CACS, LPS.

This conference will help Domestic Violence/Sexual Violence agencies identify and work with human trafficking clients.



## Grant Monitor Q & A

Dione Bassett, *Victims Services Program Specialist*

### How do I calculate grant-funded staff hours?

**Answer:** We recommend that you evaluate each staff member and determine the following:

- *What is their total salary (not including benefits)?*
- *What grants are being used to pay their salary?*
- *How many hours are devoted to each grant?*
- *Is any of their salary being used as match, or being paid as indirect costs?*

Once you have that information for each staff member, it will make it easier to transfer the information to an itemized budget and budget narrative. A helpful hint might be to add this information to an organizational chart. Also, it's important to keep the FICA/benefit information separate from the salary. Grant funds can be used to pay for personnel benefits, but it is listed separately from salary on the Excel budget and narrative. In order to calculate the grant-funded FTE (Full Time Equivalent), you would divide the number of hours devoted to the grant by 2080. Important: if your staff devotes all of their hours (2080) to a particular grant but your locality supplements their salary, the FTE needs to be calculated factoring this information into the equation.

### How should I document purchases with grant funds?

**Answer:** It is recommended that you maintain a list of all items purchased with grant funds. It is important to include the date of purchase and the grant number used to purchase the item(s). This will assist you in locating the purchase order and/or invoice if requested at a site visit. Helpful hint: take a picture of the item and keep it with the appropriate grant documentation.

### How do I calculate travel for conferences?

**Answer:** It is important to break down travel costs by the following: cost of the registration (list this expense in the supplies/other category of the budget) and airfare/train/car rental, lodging, and per diem (meals). Make sure you calculate the number of staff members attending the conference and multiply it by the registration amount, the number of nights for lodging, and the number of days for per diem. In order to calculate per diem, go to <http://perdiemcalc.net/gsa>. This calculator will provide an amount per day based on the location and dates of travel.

### Are there any required cooperative agreements? How often should they be updated?

**Answer:** DCJS does not prescribe a list of cooperative agreements that are required; however, it is required that grant recipients have cooperative agreements that are appropriate for their work and their locality. Cooperative agreements need to be updated every three years. It is good to maintain a list of current cooperative agreements with the signature date and expiration date. Also, cooperative agreements are meant to be active and not merely agreements on paper. Communicate, collaborate, and elevate services for survivors by committing to working together successfully.

### What is the first thing a grant monitor checks on a grant application?

**Answer:** All grant monitors have different processes for reviewing grant applications. However, the list below could help ensure that you will not be asked for additional information or have special conditions as part of your award package.

- Is the grant cover page signed by the Project Administrator?
- Does the grant cover page include all of the necessary information?
- Does the grant award amount exceed the projected maximum that was provided in the guidelines?
- Are indirect costs included? If so, did you send the additional required forms, including the MTDC Worksheet?
- Check to make sure that the breakdown for your award is correct. For example, if the award is:
  - 80% Federal (Total grant award amount multiplied by .80)
  - 15% State (Total grant award amount multiplied by .15)
  - 5% Match (Total grant award amount multiplied by .05)

Calculate these amounts and make sure that the grant cover page and the amounts listed on the Excel budget and budget narrative all match.

## Grantee Announcements

### Culpeper Victim/Witness Program Launches Homicide Survivors Group

If you or someone you know is a Co-victim of Homicide, which is also known as a Survivor of Homicide, please consider attending our support group. Because the violent death of a loved one is a traumatic event for everyone connected to loss, the grief experienced is like no other grief. Please join with others who understand the pain, confusion and suffering that you are experiencing. The journey is made easier when you know you are not alone.

We meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month from 6:00–7:30 pm at 740 Old Brandy Road, Culpeper, Virginia 22701. There is no cost, and light snacks and refreshments will be provided.

For more information, or If you would like to attend, please pre-register at:

Missy Garriss, LPC

[m.garriss@icloud.com](mailto:m.garriss@icloud.com)

or by calling: 919-671-0596

*If your agency has an upcoming training or event which you would like included in our newsletter, please contact Tricia Everetts, DCJS Training and Grant Program Coordinator, at [tricia.everetts@dcjs.virginia.gov](mailto:tricia.everetts@dcjs.virginia.gov)*

## Coordinators' Corner

Julia Fuller-Wilson, *Violence Against Women Program Administrator*

It's that time of the year again where those who receive VSTOP continuation grants must reapply for funding. It will be for the three-year grant cycle of CY2019–CY2021. Unless your grant is on its 10<sup>th</sup> year of funding and you have to take the 15% reduction, we anticipate level funding for all grantees. Our timeline for the VSTOP grant process will allow the Criminal Justice Services Board (CJSB) to make their final funding decisions at the CJSB meeting on December 6, 2018. After that date, we will post the awards on our website so that you will know in advance of receiving your award letter. Once you receive your statement of grant award, please be sure to read your special conditions carefully as they are changed and updated when state and federal statute and/or policy changes.

We made a few changes to VSTOP for this upcoming grant cycle. In an effort to streamline these grants, we have been able to merge VSTOP grants for those programs that receive more than one VSTOP grant. This makes the grant application process, as well as the reporting process, easier for everyone. Another change that was made was to fund some Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Victim Fund (VSDVVF) grants using federal VSTOP or VOCA funds. To avoid reducing or eliminating any VSDVVF grants, we were able to leverage our other funding resources and keep these projects fully funded. There are five VSDVVF projects that are funded through VSTOP, two of which will remain VSTOP grants indefinitely, and the other three projects will be funded under VSTOP through June 30, 2019. By that time, we can determine the best way to continue funding these projects for FY2020. If you have any questions about your VSDVVF grant that is newly-funded by either VSTOP or VOCA, please contact your Grant Monitor.

## BEST PRACTICES

# Sexual Assault Response Teams: Using a Common Language to Create a Circle of Safety around Victims

Jennifer Kline, *Improving Criminal Justice Responses Grant Program Coordinator*

Professionals working in the field of sexual assault are all too familiar with the challenges of investigating these crimes, advocating for the victims, and prosecuting the offenders. Even before the victim makes the decision to report sexual assault, (s)he has encountered multiple internal road blocks, including fear of being blamed, fear of not being believed, and fear of the investigative process. The #MeToo movement and recent media attention to high profile cases has ignited a wild fire of conversation, increasing opportunities for those in this field to educate the public about sexual assault. As a result, victims are becoming more empowered to speak out to friends and family and report to authorities, spiking hotline calls across the country.

Reporting to the authorities is only the first hurdle for victims. It is the response that the victim receives from the professionals that will have a profound effect on whether the victim will remain engaged in the criminal justice process. One-third to one-half will withdraw from the criminal justice process at some point.<sup>1</sup> This helps to explain why less than 2% of forcible rapes result in an investigation, prosecution, conviction, and incarceration.<sup>2</sup> This is often referred to as “lack of cooperation” by the professionals working these cases. But, a trauma-informed team understands not only that they are asking victims to re-live their trauma during the criminal justice process, but that social withdrawal and avoidance behaviors are symptoms of sexual assault related trauma.<sup>3</sup>

How do we keep victims engaged in long, arduous investigations that include invasive medical exams, hours of personal questions and sometimes court room testimony, all while they are experiencing trauma symptoms? A Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) forms a circle of safety around victims by developing protocols to map out a collective, consistent, and trauma-informed response. Victims must feel emotionally, psychologically, and physically safe in order to stay engaged in the system. SARTs do that by providing a consistent and trauma-informed message by every professional who comes in contact with the victim.

We often hear that it’s the victim advocate’s job to help the victim feel safe by providing compassion and support, but if the investigator’s language suggests doubt and blame, the victim’s feeling of emotional safety is lost and (s)he may withdraw. Research documents that negative reactions are worse than no reaction at all, in terms of their impact on sexual assault victims. They can even increase a survivor’s risk of sexual assault re-victimization in the future.<sup>4</sup>

All SART members must agree to a consistent, common message that helps the victim feel safe.

### **When everyone on the SART speaks the same language – that has power!**

**Tell the victim you believe him/her.** Victims will not stay engaged in the process if it is not clear that they are believed. Some law enforcement officers and prosecutors have an issue with telling a victim that they believe them because they feel their neutrality will be jeopardized. Telling the victim you believe him/her does not mean, “Always believe everything victims say.” It simply reflects the basic logic of why we refer to it as a “crime report” and why we collect information and evidence from “victims” and “witnesses.” If there was no starting presumption that a crime report had merit, no investigation would be conducted at all.<sup>5</sup>

**Empower the victim by giving them choices.** Let the victim choose where they feel the safest and the most comfortable meeting. Let them choose where to sit. The simplest of choices go a long way. During interviews, ask them if they need a break and always ask if they would like an advocate present in the room.

**Ask, don’t tell.** Don’t tell victims what you think they need. Ask “What can we do to make you feel safe?” Ask “How can we work together to best support you through this process?” or “Can I share a concern?”

**Acknowledge the difficulty of the situation.** “We commend you for reporting this.” “Thank you for trusting us with this information.”

**Apologies go a long way.** Apologies acknowledge the difficulty the victim is experiencing. “I am sorry this happened to you.” “I’m sorry we are meeting like this.”<sup>6</sup>

## BEST PRACTICES

### Sexual Assault Response Teams:

#### Using a Common Language to Create a Circle of Safety around Victims *(Continued from page 5)*

**“You are not alone.”** Tell the victim that they will not be going through this process alone and that they have an entire “team” working with them. Explain each team member’s role. Remember that when victims are in crisis they will not be able to remember all the information you are giving them. Give them a brochure or one-page handout explaining each team member’s role, which they can refer to later.

If your entire SART practices these simple rules, victims will feel supported and their healing can begin. How do SARTs integrate these practices? Make time for a short trauma-informed practice training at each of your SART meetings. At a following meeting, ask each SART member to recall one example of how they used one of these phrases with a victim. Don’t be afraid to share mistakes. That’s how we learn. As John Wilkinson, Attorney Advisor with AEQUITAS and former Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney in Fredericksburg, Virginia said, “I started prosecuting sexual assault cases like any other crime, until I participated on a SART where victim advocates taught me about how trauma impacts these victims.”

For more information about SARTs, go to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center’s SART Toolkit at:

[www.nsvrc.org/sarts/toolkit](http://www.nsvrc.org/sarts/toolkit).

<sup>1</sup> Frazier, P., Candell, S., Arikian, N., & Tofteland, A. (1994). Rape survivors and the legal system, In M. Constanzo and S. Oskamp (Eds.), *Violence and the Law* (Chapter 6, pp. 135-158. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

<sup>2</sup> Lonsway, K.A. & Archambault, J. (2012). The ‘justice gap’ for sexual assault cases: Future directions for research and reform. *Violence Against Women*, 18 (2), 145–168.

<sup>3</sup> Tremblay, T. (September 2018) Training: Overcoming the Complexities of Sexual Violence: Understanding the Realities, p 18.

<sup>4</sup> Lonsway, K.A. & Archambault, J. (September 2016). Start by Believing: Participation by Criminal Justice Professionals, p.6.

<sup>5</sup> Lonsway, p 6

<sup>6</sup> Tremblay, p 20

## VOCA New Initiative Spotlight

*Anya Shaffer, Victims Services Program Specialist*

Family Service of Roanoke Valley, the first human service agency in the Roanoke Valley, has served the community since 1901. Its mission is to transform lives by healing trauma and restoring hope for families and individuals of all ages through mental health counseling, case management, and life skills education. Throughout the organization’s history, Family Service has worked to fill gaps in the community by ensuring access to underserved populations.

In 2016, Family Service began to recognize a need for easier and more consistent access to services by crime victims with limited English proficiency (LEP). Family Service began dialogue with other human service agencies in the Valley and realized that the issue of inaccessibility was a common barrier to effective treatment and advocacy services across the region. The Roanoke Valley is a resettlement community with representation of over 100 languages spoken across the region. Small, non-profit agencies found it difficult to locate and afford language services for potential clients.

Family Service of Roanoke Valley, in collaboration with five non-profit partners, wrote an application for VOCA New Initiative funding that would facilitate the provision of professional interpretation services for victims with limited English proficiency. The Health and Wellness Interpreters of the Roanoke Valley initiative has provided access to services such as mental health care, physical health care, and victim support services. The project has facilitated community-wide awareness of needs specific to survivors in the immigrant and refugee community. It has encouraged collaboration across non-profit, for profit, and academic communities, resulting in a wrap-around response to needs of LEP victims. It has offered an opportunity to build trust between communities of people, broadening cultural humility and making the Valley a more welcoming place to live.

# Staff Spotlight



## **Anya Shaffer, *Victims Services Program Specialist***

### **Share a little about your educational and professional background.**

I have a B.A. in Political Science and a Master's degree in Public Administration from Virginia Commonwealth University. After graduating from undergrad, I worked a variety of jobs before deciding to go back to school with the intention of working in the non-profit sector. Then in the last year of my program, I got an internship at the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), working on the program evaluation of a reproductive coercion screening program. I discovered I really liked the public sector and the public health approach to violence prevention. That internship turned into a full time position, and I spent five years at VDH before coming to DCJS.

### **What is your role at DCJS—Victims Services Section?**

My official title is Victims Services Program Specialist, but the position is really that of a grant monitor, ensuring compliance and working with grantees who receive state and federal funding supporting victim services throughout the state.

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

I learned so much in the five years that I spent at VDH prior to this position, and while I was sad to leave the world of prevention, I was really excited to spend more time working with local programs and reengaging with the intervention-focused side of this field.

### **What do you enjoy most about your work at DCJS?**

I love working with local programs and hearing about the work that folks do in their communities. I also really like the team that we have at DCJS and especially working with my fellow grant monitors!

### **What has been your proudest accomplishment at DCJS?**

Whenever I'm able to help a grantee work through a challenge or find a solution to a problem, I feel proud.

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

I had a variety of jobs prior to working for the state. I don't know that any were truly unusual, but two that were unconventional were working as the box office manager for a small playhouse and working for a curtain/window treatment company.

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

When I was very small I wanted to be Pepsi truck driver because I pictured free soda and waving at people!

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

This is such a hard question! Is it cheating to pick a whole continent? I'm going to say South America, because of the breathtaking and incredibly varied landscape, the kind and generous people and the delicious food. You could spend a lifetime travelling around and never run out of amazing things to see. If I have to pick a true single place, I would pick a tropical beach with clear blue water and minimal waves.

### **What would you title the autobiography of your life?**

*"Everything Turned Out OK"*



*DCJS Victims Services Program Specialist Anya Shaffer*

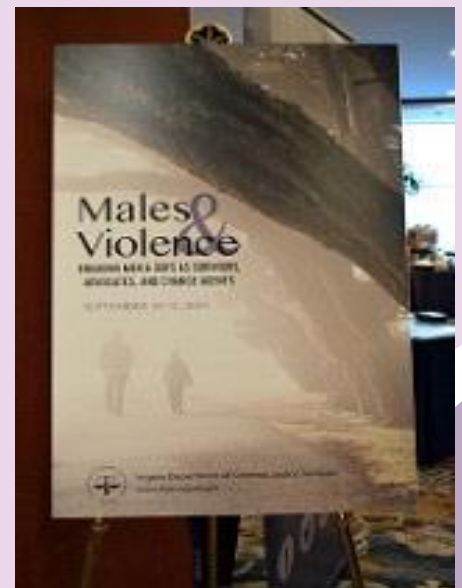
## DCJS “Males and Violence” Conference

Nearly 300 participants attended the “Males and Violence: Engaging Men and Boys as Survivors, Advocates, and Change Agents” at the Omni Richmond Hotel in September 2018.

This two-day event featured local and national speakers presenting on males as victims of human trafficking, interpersonal violence, and sexual assault. Presentations also included topics such as mentoring boys and young men as strategy to prevent violence, engaging men as advocates and allies in ending violence against women, military sexual trauma, and intersections of faith and male-related violence.



*Dr. David Lisak, Ph.D, and 1in6 Board Member and actor, Anthony Edwards, with Bristlecone Project Participants.*



*“Males and Violence” conference poster.*



*Anton Bell, Hampton Commonwealth's Attorney, presents on "Mentoring Matters".*



*DCJS Victims Services Program Specialists Andrew Kinch, Tierra Smith, and Dione Bassett welcome attendees to the conference.*



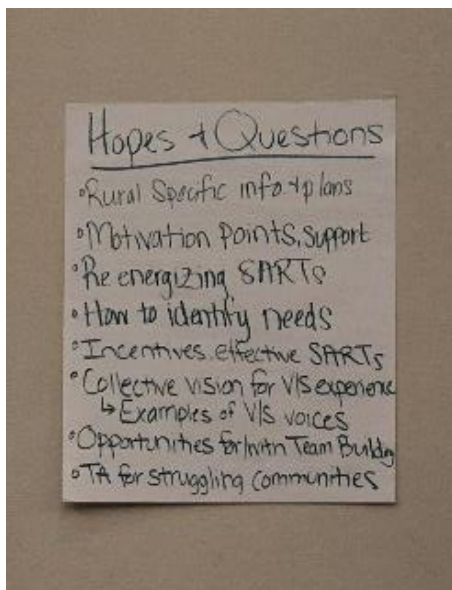
## Virginia Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Summit — November 7-8, 2018

DCJS Victims Services hosted a two-day summit to discuss how to create strong and sustainable Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART) in Virginia. Attendees also participated in a full day focus-group discussion to develop a strategic plan for improving systems response to sexual violence in Virginia through a SART Expert Advisory Group.

To learn more about the SART Expert Advisory Group, please contact Jennifer Kline, DCJS Improving Criminal Justice Responses Grant Program Coordinator at [jennifer.kline@dcjs.virginia.gov](mailto:jennifer.kline@dcjs.virginia.gov).



*Presenter, Johannanna Ganz, leads a discussion at the DCJS SART Summit.*



*Discussion points from the 2018 DCJS SART Summit.*

## DCJS Victims Services Presented “Human Trafficking for the Victim/Witness Professional” Training

The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services sponsored two, one-day trainings titled, “Human Trafficking for the Victim/Witness Professional”. The trainings were held in Williamsburg and Roanoke in October and November, 2018.

Developed specifically for victim/witness staff, these trainings featured presentations on best practices and resources for victim/witness staff in their work with human trafficking survivors. Speakers included Hayley Walczel, Virginia Victim Assistance Network; Deanne “Dede” Wallace, Department of Homeland Security; Janet Balsler, Victim/Witness Director, City of Staunton Commonwealth’s Attorney; Eric Olsen, Stafford County Commonwealth’s Attorney, Patricia Foster, DCJS Victim/Witness Program Coordinator; and Dione Bassett, DCJS Victims Services Program Specialist.



*Dione Bassett, DCJS Victims Services Program Specialist, presents “The VOCA Rule and Human Trafficking”.*

## October – Domestic Violence Awareness Month

As part of month long activities for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, DCJS wore purple on October 18, 2018 for the National Network to End Domestic Violence's #PurpleThursday.

Pictured are DCJS staff with Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, Brian J. Moran.



## Contact Us

Please contact us if you have any questions or need assistance.

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