




NYSOCA
NEW YORK STATE CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

LEADERSHIP
CONFERENCE

YOUR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING EXPERIENCE

New York State Children's Alliance
2023 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Welcoming: Law Enforcement, Prosecutors, CSEC & Victim Advocates,
Child Protective/Child Welfare Personnel, Probation Officers, Medical Providers,
Mental Health Professionals, School Personnel, Community Outreach & Education Staff,
and others working with children

OCT. 3RD - OCT. 4TH 2023 • SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY

AT-A-GLANCE

DAY ONE: OCT. 3RD

8:00-8:30
Breakfast &
Registration

8:30-8:45
Welcome

8:45-9:45
Keynote

9:45-10:00
Break/Move to Rooms

10:00-11:15
Session 1

11:15-11:30
Break/Move to Rooms

11:30-12:45
Session 2

12:45-1:45
LUNCH

1:45-3:00
Session 3

3:00-3:15
Break/Move to Rooms

3:15-4:30
Session 4

DAY TWO: OCT. 4TH

8:00-8:30
Breakfast

8:30-8:45
Welcome & Awards

8:45-9:45
Plenary

9:45-10:00
Break/Move to Rooms

10:00-11:15
Session 1

11:15-11:30
Break

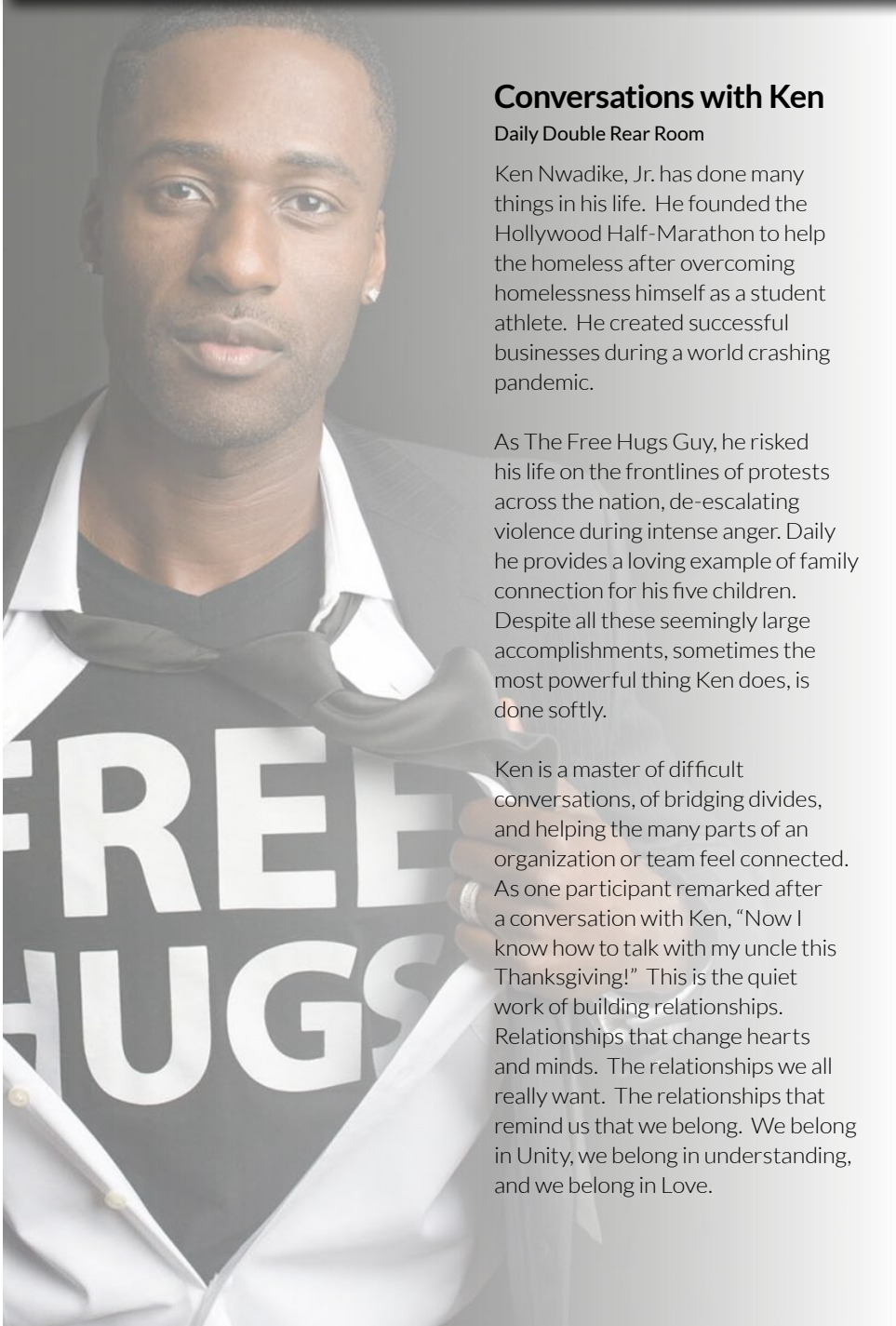
11:30-12:30
Closing & Raffles

WELCOME

We are excited you have joined us for our 2023 Leadership Conference. The purpose of the Conference is to develop and enhance professional skills in prevention, recognition, assessment, and treatment of all forms of maltreatment.

Please know that the NYSCA team is here for you to provide any assistance and support you may need. Enjoy the conference, and we'll see you next year!

KEYNOTE: Ken Nwadike, Jr., Founder Free Hugs Project



Conversations with Ken

Daily Double Rear Room

Ken Nwadike, Jr. has done many things in his life. He founded the Hollywood Half-Marathon to help the homeless after overcoming homelessness himself as a student athlete. He created successful businesses during a world crashing pandemic.

As The Free Hugs Guy, he risked his life on the frontlines of protests across the nation, de-escalating violence during intense anger. Daily he provides a loving example of family connection for his five children. Despite all these seemingly large accomplishments, sometimes the most powerful thing Ken does, is done softly.

Ken is a master of difficult conversations, of bridging divides, and helping the many parts of an organization or team feel connected. As one participant remarked after a conversation with Ken, "Now I know how to talk with my uncle this Thanksgiving!" This is the quiet work of building relationships. Relationships that change hearts and minds. The relationships we all really want. The relationships that remind us that we belong. We belong in Unity, we belong in understanding, and we belong in Love.

WORKSHOP SESSION 1: 10:00-11:15am

1A

Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE)

PRESENTED BY: Christopher Streno, Vestal Police

The Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) course, designed and built on the Avoid, Deny, Defend (ADD) strategy developed by ALERTT in 2004, provides strategies, guidance and a proven plan for surviving an active shooter event. Topics include the history and prevalence of active shooter events, human response to crisis, civilian response options, medical issues and mental health issues related to active attack events. **(Win Room)**

1B

Speaking with Families of Color About Abuse

PRESENTED BY: Kristina Coleman, LMSW, Safe Horizon

This workshop will help providers understand the history of slavery and how it impacts current parent practices. Providers will learn techniques to build engagement and impact outcomes. **(Place Room)**

1C

False Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse & Issues of Recantation

PRESENTED BY: Lawrence Braunstein, Braunstein & Zuckerman, Esqs.

This presentation will explore the process of analyzing whether allegations of child sexual abuse are false. Issues regarding recantation will also be addressed. **(Show Room)**

1D

"Take it Down" and Other NCMEC Tools to Prevent Further Victimization

PRESENTED BY: Debra Ortiz-Pardi, Outreach Program Manager, NCMEC

In 2023, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children launched a new program called "Take It Down" – a free service for people who have images or videos of themselves nude, partially nude, or in sexually explicit situations taken when they were under the age of 18 that they believe have been or will be shared online. This presentation will walk participants through the service and share additional NCMEC resources to prevent the further victimization of children. **(Quinella/Exacta Room)**

MOVE TO ROOMS: 11:15am-11:30am



WORKSHOP SESSION 2: 11:30-12:45pm

2A

Criminal Asphyxiation with a Focus on Aquatics: Beyond the Obvious in Child Abuse and Homicide

PRESENTED BY: Andrea Zaferes, Lifeguard Systems

If you don't know a crime exists what are the chances it will be identified, investigated, or prosecuted? The use of asphyxiation (e.g., drowning, strangulation, suffocations) abuse against children is more prevalent than currently understood by those who are tasked to identify & investigate allegations of child abuse, sexual violence, and homicide. These cases, being largely, if not fully, equivocal, and circumstantial also present challenges to practitioners as there may be no external injuries and can appear as natural respiratory illnesses or drowning accidents. Drowning is the number one cause of death to children aged 1-4 in the U.S. and is third for infants – which can cause assumptions of accidents resulting in tunnel vision, confirmation bias, and missed crimes. This workshop will provide all members of the multidisciplinary team with the tools to assess and interview children who have been asphyxiated. With proper training and protocol, practitioners have started to better identify this often missed and lethal crime, finally giving this crime and the victims a voice. **(Win Room)**

2B

Building Caregiver Resilience Using the Strengthening Families Protective Framework

PRESENTED BY: Michele Mullen, LCSW, Northeast Regional CAC

Caregiver support in the aftermath of a disclosure of child abuse is essential for the child's healing process. We can enhance caregiver resilience using the Strengthening Families Protective Factors framework, an evidence-informed tool using a strengths-based approach. Through this workshop, participants will explore the five protective factors and develop strategies for caregiver resilience. This workshop is appropriate for MDT members seeking to increase their skills working with supportive caregivers in child abuse investigations. **(Place Room)**

2C

CAC Case Study-MHACG/Child Advocacy Center (Mental Health Association of Columbia-Greene)

FACILITATED BY: Julianne Baumann, LMSW, MHACG/Child Advocacy Center

Join us for an interesting case study and overview of a challenging case from Columbia County. You will hear from MDT members discussing their roles and how they overcame challenges to bring this case to a successful conclusion. **(Show Room)**

2D

Introduction to EMDR and Trauma Healing in Therapy

PRESENTED BY: Vicki Leigh Braunstein, LCSW, Saratoga Center for the Family
Megan Heeder-Megan, LMHC, Saratoga Center for the Family

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 40-50% of the population will experience trauma in early childhood. Untreated trauma experiences can significantly increase the likelihood of emotional and physical risks in adulthood. Successful Evidence-Based interventions can significantly change these negative outcomes for individuals and improve both psychological and physical resiliency. This presentation will define trauma and explain the impact it has on the body and behavior. This foundational information will provide the basis to understand how EMDR and other trauma processing modalities can help reduce negative emotional, psychological, and physical outcomes. **(Quinella/Exacta Room)**

LUNCH BREAK: 12:45pm-1:45pm

WORKSHOP SESSION 3: 1:45-3:00pm

3A

Conducting an Effective Narrative Practice

PRESENTED BY: Kathy Colgan, Independent Forensic Interviewer

Participants will learn how to conduct a narrative practice during the rapport-building phase of a forensic interview. **(Win Room)**

3B

The Bystanders: An Overview of People v. Erica Bell and Michael Stagles and People v. Anthony Love and Andrea Lipton

PRESENTED BY: Sara VanStrydonck, Child Abuse Bureau

This session is an examination of two heartbreaking child homicides from the City of Rochester. This presentation will explore the short and tragic lives of completely separate toddlers: Brook Stagles and Keimere "Moochie" Marshall. Sara will discuss the investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators as well as the opportunities that the community and systems had to avoid and prevent these horrific fatalities. Participants should be prepared for difficult discussions regarding the heartbreaking death of our most vulnerable citizens. At the end, it is the hope that no one will be a bystander to child abuse and will share this message in their communities. **(Place Room)**

3C

An Introduction to Fund Development

PRESENTED BY: Lori Avery, Pat's Place, Charlotte, NC

Pat's Place child advocacy center has been tremendously successful in raising large fundraising dollars. Lori's introduction to fund development will provide a road map of where to begin and how to implement a fund development strategy for your CAC. **(Show Room)**

3D

Preparing for NCA Accreditation: What to Know to Create a Rockstar Application

PRESENTED BY: Alyssa Todd, National Children's Alliance

This presentation will review NCA's timeline for reaccreditation, and what to expect in the year leading up to a site visit. We will discuss required documents, the application portal, and review strategies to create an easy-to-follow application that will make the review process smoother for Center's and their reviewers, no matter the state of your CAC. Participant questions are encouraged through-out this workshop.

(Quinella/Exacta Room)

BREAK: 3:00pm-3:15pm



WORKSHOP SESSION 4: 3:15-4:30pm

4A

Non-Verbal: What it Means and Why a Forensic Interview is Still Possible

PRESENTED BY: Dermot Whalen, Modell Consulting Group

This workshop is intended for professionals who want to learn how to communicate with individuals who do not speak or who are considered “non-verbal.” This workshop will discuss adaptations to account for individuals who do not speak, use gestures, use a communication device, or speak a few words. Through this workshop, participants will have an increased understanding of verbal behavior and communication methods; increased knowledge of communication considerations when interviewing someone who does not speak; and learn reliable and legally defensible techniques that can be applied in forensic interviews.

(Win Room)

4B

YPSB Panel Discussion

PANELISTS: Dina McManus, LCSW-R, Director of Clinical Services, LaSalle School, Kevin Maloney, Executive Director, START Children’s Center, Adam Berry, Supervisor of CAC-MDT Unit, NYS OCFS, Lynn Tubbs, Director of Cross System Supports, Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success, NYS OCFS

Working with Youth with Problematic Sexualized Behavior (YPSB) is a challenge many CAC’s grapple with. Join our panel of treatment providers, policy makers, and stakeholders to learn more about working with YPSB at your CAC and the effects of the recently passed Raise the Lower Age legislation. **(Place Room)**

4C

Working with Homeland Security on Commercial Sexual Exploitation & Trafficking of Children

PRESENTED BY: Daria Egan, Homeland Security

This workshop will explain the role of Homeland Security in investigating Commercial Sexual Exploitation & Trafficking Children (CSE/T) and the crucial role of the CAC/MDT in this process. The presentation will cover and review the definition of CSE/T. Information will include individual and community risk factors, red flags/warning signs, identification of victims, and control tactics exploiters use. Participants will further explore complexities of trauma as related to CSE/T. **(Show Room)**

4D

Trauma-Informed Supervision: A Practical Approach for CACs

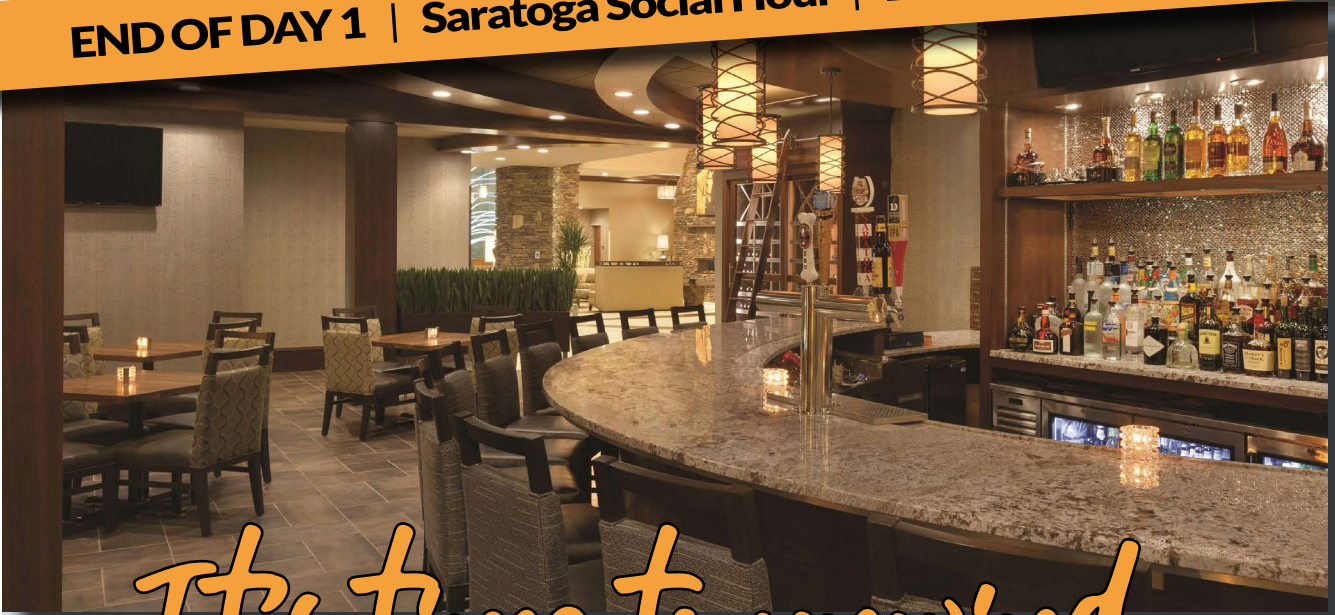
PRESENTED BY: Shelley Hitzel, LMSW, Niagara County Child Advocacy Center

This workshop will discuss how the principles of trauma-informed practice apply in the supervisory context and will provide an overview of the trauma-informed framework for supervision. Approaches to individual and group supervision, performance reviews, incident debriefing and how the trauma-informed values of safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment can be used by supervisors to “neutralize the workplace environment” will be discussed. Finally, supervisory supports to mitigate vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, and burn out will be explored, as well as how to support oneself and the workforce to promote resilience and growth.

(Quinella/Exacta Room)

END OF DAY ONE

END OF DAY 1 | Saratoga Social Hour | Embassy Suites



It's time to unwind...

**Tuesday, 5:00pm-6:00pm
Saratoga Social Hour**

Take a short walk to the
Embassy Suites, 86 Congress Street, Saratoga Springs
where each conference attendee will receive
a free drink ticket
good for one beer, or one glass of wine, or one soda.

Please pick up your free drink ticket
at the Embassy Suites lobby
by presenting your conference name badge.

See You There!

DAY 2: 8:00am-12:15pm

8:00-8:30am / Breakfast

8:30-8:45am / Welcome & CAC Awards

PLENARY: 8:45-9:45am

Navigating Difficult Conversations-Dr. Anthony Orsi, The Orsini Way

Through his decades of research and experience as an ICU physician, Dr. Orsini has mastered the key elements required to navigate through difficult conversations in the most effective and compassionate manner. This presentation teaches the communication skills necessary to positively influence challenging situations encountered daily. Participants will learn how to use compassionate communication to build trusting relationships quickly, learn how humans communicate and connect, understand emotions and how they impact interpersonal dynamics. You will learn how to master verbal and non-verbal techniques used to de-escalate difficult conversations and convey empathy in any situation. Learn the PROGRAM® method of communication to deliver bad news and navigate difficult conversations with ease. **(Daily Double Rear Room)**

WORKSHOP SESSION 1: 10:00am-11:15am

1A

Compassionate Communication Skills for Child Abuse Professionals

PRESENTED BY: Dr. Anthony Orsini, The Orsini Way & Anthony DeVincenzo, Northeast Regional CAC

This interactive training will teach participants effective communication skills and provides a framework to conduct the difficult conversations that often occur when working as a Child Abuse Professional or part of an MDT. By exploring compassionate communication, participants will leave the training with practical skills to communicate and form trusting relationships with children and families. **(Win Room)**

1B

The Medical Exam: The Process and Why It Is Important to the Child

PRESENTED BY: Nancy Harris, The Regional CAC Program

The medical exam is a critical component of the CAC model, but often not understood by the non-medical team members. This workshop will explain the medical exam process, why it is performed, and will review how it helps the children heal. **(Place Room)**

1C

Rapid Assessment: A Multidisciplinary Response to Serious Injury and Fatality Cases

PRESENTED BY: Shelley Hitzel, LMSW, Niagara County Child Advocacy Center

The Rapid Assessment process brings together professionals responding to a child fatality or serious physical injury in order to share information and coordinate investigation and intervention as quickly as possible. Case examples will be used to highlight how the process allows for a more clear, comprehensive, and coordinated response to child fatalities and serious injury cases and has positively influenced case outcomes in Niagara County. **(Show Room)**

1D

Developing a Communications Plan for Your CAC

PRESENTED BY: Michele Mullen & Myia Hill, Northeast Regional CAC

Are you interested in developing or improving your communications strategy for your CAC? In this session, speakers will discuss their collaboration with a marketing firm on defining NRCAC's messaging and branding. Participants will learn strategies for developing and implementing a brand guide and will leave with valuable tools and resources to assist them in the process. **(Quinella/Exacta Room)**

11:30am-12:30pm MOVE TO CLOSING PRESENTATION / RAFFLES

CLOSING PRESENTATION 11:30am-Daily Double Rear Room

No Excuse! Incorporating Core Values, Accountability and Balance into Your Life and Career

PRESENTED BY: Jay C. Rifenbary, Rifenbary Training and Development

Built on a solid foundation of core values, self-responsibility, organizational accountability, integrity, and purpose, this exciting "No Excuse!" program teaches, validates, and supports the importance of key principles and skills, such as self-control, personal respect, forgiveness, passion and positive attitude, as they pertain to one's personal and professional success.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS:

SARATOGA SOCIAL HOUR: Tuesday, Embassy Suites 5:00pm-6:00pm



Each conference attendee will receive a free drink ticket for one beer, or one glass of wine, or one

CAC AWARD PRESENTATIONS: Wednesday, 8:30am-8:45am



NYSCA appreciates and thanks all the amazing multidisciplinary team members who provide critical services in 47 child Advocacy Centers across the state. We are excited to recognize, again this year, a few outstanding team members.

RAFFLE PRIZES: Wednesday, 11:30am-12:30pm



There are a lot of great items to check out this year. Make sure to fill out your 5 raffle tickets and enter to win.

CONFERENCE CERTIFICATES



All those attending the conference will receive a certificate of attendance based on workshops attended after completing a conference evaluation. Certificates of completion will meet ongoing education hours for NCA Standards.

CONFERENCE CEU:



These are available for Mental Health Counseling, Social Work and Psychology and you must sign in at the Registration Table each day of the Conference.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING. PLEASE JOIN US AGAIN IN 2024.

SAVE THE DATE for the 2024 NYSCA Leadership Conference:

October 1 and October 2, 2024, at the Holiday Inn in picturesque Saratoga Springs, NY.

We look forward to another amazing conference with all of you.

Thank You

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NYS CA Staff & Board Members

BIOGRAPHIES

KEN NWADIKE, JR.

Ken E. Nwadike, Jr. is an American documentary filmmaker, motivational speaker, and peace activist popularly known as the Free Hugs Guy. Ken is the founder of the Free Hugs Project, which gained popularity as he made major news headlines for his peacekeeping efforts and de-escalation of violence during protests, riots, and political rallies. Ken was featured in Google's 2016 Year in Search video as a highlight among some of the year's most defining moments and he has made many appearances on news programs, including CNN, USA Today, Good Morning Britain, and BBC News.

CHRISTOPHER STRENO

Christopher Streno has 32 years in law enforcement and is in his 27th year with the town of Vestal Police. Through his career he has worked as a patrol officer, a detective, a patrol and detective supervisor, an administrator and is currently the Captain of the department. Some of the many specialized trainings and certifications he has received include being a police instructor, a firearms instructor, a forensic child interviewer and a crisis negotiator. He is a regular instructor at several police and peace officer academies as well as department in-service training; specializing in topics such as interview techniques, investigating reports of child abuse, officer wellness, procedural justice, fair & impartial policing and implicit bias. He has been a member of the Broome County Child Advocacy Center Executive Committee for over 12 years and is also a member of the Southern Tier Law Enforcement Memorial Association Executive Committee, the Broome County Peer Response Initiative Committee, the Broome County Family Violence Prevention Council and the Broome County Youth Bureau. Outside of police work, he is the Youth Activities Director for the town of Binghamton as well as the Chairman of the town's Planning Board. He lives in Binghamton with his wife Prema and their four sons.

KRISTINA COLEMAN

Kristina has served in the social services field for over 14 years specializing in child welfare, family reunification, trauma treatment, mental health, program implementation, and development. She has two master's degrees, one in social work leadership from the Silberman School of Social Work and in Public Administration from Mercy College. She has held multiple roles at both the direct service and leadership level. Kristina is the Vice President of Child Advocacy and Mental Health Programs at Safe Horizon and the Founder/CEO of youRmore. Her private practice focuses on mental health and the impact of intergenerational trauma among communities of color. As someone who values leadership, education, teamwork, and community, Kristina's mission is to inspire, develop, educate and create opportunities for people to identify their strengths to live up to their full potential. Kristina is a Member at Large at the National Association of Social Workers, NYC Chapter, and a board member of the YMCA of Rockland and of several organizations that support youth and family work.

LAWRENCE BRAUNSTEIN

Lawrence Jay Braunstein is a partner in the law firm of Braunstein & Zuckerman, Esqs, in White Plains, New York. His practice includes the areas of Matrimonial and Family Law and related civil and criminal litigation. Since 1985 he has specifically focused his practice in the areas of child custody litigation, including resist/refuse and parental alienation cases and litigation involving allegations of child sexual abuse, physical abuse, and abusive head trauma (shaken baby) in matrimonial, family, and criminal cases. He regularly lectures as an invited speaker, both nationally and internationally, in the areas of child sexual abuse, physical abuse and abusive head trauma, child custody litigation, refuse/resist dynamics, expert witness testimony, courtroom psychology, trial procedures, and on various other criminal, family and matrimonial law topics. Since 1999 he has served on the faculty of the New York City Police Department Sex Crimes and Child Abuse Investigation Course and, since 2014, on the faculty of the New York City Police Department Homicide Investigator Course.

DEBRA ORTIZ-PARDI

Debra Ortiz-Pardi serves as an Outreach Program Manager with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) from the New York Regional Office in Rochester, NY. A seasoned trainer and community educator, she leads outreach efforts locally, regionally, and nationally to amplify NCMEC's services, resources, and programs. Debra's career in the child safety and prevention field spans over 24 years, presenting to and empowering youth, caregivers and professional audiences on NCMEC's resources and prevention messaging. Debra's training and facilitation experience also includes Kids & Co. Together for Safety, the NYS Identification and Reporting of Child Abuse and Maltreatment Course, and Darkness to Light Stewards of Children.

DERMOT WHALEN

Dermot Whelan is a Senior Consultant for the Disability Services Division of Modell Consulting Group, LLC. In his role, Mr. Whelan is responsible for teaching and co-authoring trainings for investigations of abuse against individuals with disabilities. Mr. Whelan was instrumental in the development of an advanced Forensic Interviewing Protocol for interviewing individuals with disabilities (Project FIND). Prior to joining MCG, Mr. Whelan served as a Criminal Investigator with the New York State Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs. Mr. Whelan started with the Justice Center in July of 2013, within weeks of the agency going operational. Mr. Whelan was primarily responsible for conducting and supervising criminal investigations stemming from allegations of abuse and neglect against vulnerable people who receive services through New York State-operated, licensed, or certified agencies. Mr. Whelan routinely conducted forensic interviews of individuals with disabilities of all ages. Before specializing in investigating crimes against individuals with disabilities, Mr. Whelan started his police career in 1991 as a member of the New York City Housing Police and attended the NYC Police Department's Police Academy. After several years of policing housing projects in the Bronx, Mr. Whelan took a position with the City of Albany Police Department where he served as a Patrolman, Detective, and Sergeant.

ANDREA ZAFERES

Andrea began teaching diving with Dr. Lee Somers and Karl Huggins at the University of Michigan's Scientific Diving Program. She served as a Diving Safety Officer for the American Museum of Natural History's Animal Behavior Research Department and had three research papers published by the age of 22. She took her first diving rescue course at age 16 with Walt Butch Hendrick. Since that time, she has become Vice President of Lifeguard Systems Inc. and RIPTIDE Inc, a course director and instructor trainer, a well published author, a noted public speaker, an award winner, a program designer, and is one of the leading trainers in the international water rescue and recovery industries today. Andrea teaches over hundreds of police, fire, EMS, military, and USCG personnel annually throughout the U.S., Canada, Asia, and Caribbean.

Andrea teaches approximately 1000 surface rescue and dive personnel annually. She co-authored with Walt Hendrick numerous videos and books and has over 100 published articles.

MICHELLE MULLEN

Michele Mullen, LCSW, is a Training Specialist with Northeast Regional Children's Advocacy Center. Michele provides training and technical assistance to developing and established CACs and MDTs in the 9 northeast states. Michele creates and delivers local, state, and regional trainings on Victim Advocacy: Working with Children, Caregivers and the MDT; Vicarious Trauma/Building Resiliency for Child Abuse Professionals; National Children's Alliance (NCA) Standards for Accreditation; and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC). Michele also conducts onsite training and consultation with multidisciplinary teams and CAC staff regarding Multidisciplinary Team Development, Strategic Planning and Board Development. Michele works with the NRCAC team to coordinate agency branding, webpage, marketing materials, and social media presence. Michele joined NRCAC in September 2014 after 17 years with the Norfolk District Attorney's Office/Children's Advocacy Center in Massachusetts. Michele began as a Victim Advocate before moving to the CAC Director role and was dedicated to the development of a fully accredited Children's Advocacy Center in 2010.

VICKI LEIGH BRAUNSTEIN

Vicki Leigh Braunstein, LCSW, currently works as a Therapist and does Education and Program Development at Saratoga Center for the Family School Based Program. Vicki has a BA in Fine and Applied Art from Curry College and The Museum School of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; MFA in Dance from Temple University, Philadelphia, PA and MSW from SUNY Albany School of Social Welfare, Albany, N.Y. In 1992, Vicki completed a NOLS (National Outdoor Leadership School, University of Utah) program. In 2001, she became a certified yoga instructor. From 2001-2005, she taught yoga and meditation as an adjunct faculty member at Temple University through the Dance Department. In 2010 and 2012, she co-taught an Alternative Therapy graduate social work course using her knowledge and skills of meditation, yoga for mindfulness and self-regulation. Vicki is a certified EMDR therapist and trained in EMDR-Play, Art, TF-CBT, IFS and Somatic Therapy. Recently, she has completed her Certification with Dr. Uma Naidoo and Nourishing the Mind Gut in the use of food to address mental health issues.

MEGAN HEEDER-MEGAN

Megan Heeder-Megan, LMHC, is the Director of the Student Empowerment Program, a school-based mental health service of Saratoga Center for the Family. In addition to supervising school-based therapists, she provides psychotherapy services at the Center to children, adults, and families. Megan's core belief is that deeper human connection, belonging and meaning making are central to the healing journey and mental wellness. Megan practices from a trauma-informed, holistic lens, helping people develop a deeper sense of self, and self-in-relationship. Megan is trained in EMDR, DBT, TF-CBT, solution-focused, motivational interviewing and is a 200-hour Yoga Trained Teacher. Megan has lived in Central New York, Vermont and the Adirondacks and now moved home where she resides in the Capital Region with her husband and two children.

KATHY COLGAN

Kathy Colgan has conducted thousands of forensic interviews in her role as an independent forensic interviewer for Ontario, Yates, Seneca, Genesee, Wyoming, and Orleans Counties. She has provided mentoring services and training to others in the field of forensic interviewing. Prior to starting her own consulting business Kathy investigated thousands of cases through her role as an investigator for the IMPACT team, a multidisciplinary team that investigates cases of severe physical and sexual abuse for Child Protective Services in Monroe County, New York. Before working for Child Protective Services, Kathy worked at the Monroe County Children's Detention Center as a childcare worker serving a population of juvenile offenders and delinquents. Concurrently, she worked part-time at Hillside Children's Center, a non-for-profit agency serving children in need of respite care. Ms. Colgan teaches the Sexual Abuse Dynamics and Intervention Training for Fordham University's program, Children First and is involved with a pilot Forensic Interviewing Mentoring Program through the Northeast Child Advocacy Center. Ms. Colgan taught New York State Best Practices Forensic Interviewing Training for ten years, the Child Protective Mandated Reporter training course for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (MAPP) training for foster parents and lectured in the community about child protective issues. Kathy serves on the Board of Directors for the New York State Children's Alliance. In her spare time Kathy enjoys spending time with her husband and children at their camp in the Adirondacks.

SARA VANSTRYDONCK

Sara VanStrydonck joined the Monroe County District Attorney's Office in September of 2005. In January 2012, she accepted a supervisor position in the Child Abuse Bureau and is currently the Chief of the Special Victims Unit. Prior to accepting this assignment, Sara had been a member of the Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Bureau since 2007. During her tenure, Sara has come to specialize in cases involving victims of child sexual abuse, child witnesses to violent crimes and child fatalities. She was born and raised in Rochester, NY. Sara received her undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan (GO BLUE!) and her J.D. from the University of Buffalo Law School. She has served or is currently serving on boards for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children as well as Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Rochester. Sara also is lecturer for Zero Abuse Project in the Child First curriculum. Her most important role is being a mom to her three daughters: Maggie, Molly and Katie.

ALYSSA TODD

Alyssa Todd worked as an Investigative Social Worker for Vermont CPS for almost five years, then moved to Philadelphia for grad school, where she continued to work with youth in foster care. She moved back to Vermont and became the Director and Forensic Interviewer of a small Associate Member center in Brattleboro, VT in 2012. In 2016 the Center became fully Accredited with NCA under Alyssa's leadership. Alyssa joined NCA in September 2019 as a member of the accreditation team and assisted with the most recent revision of the Standards for Accredited Centers. Alyssa provides training and technical assistance to CACs as they navigate the accreditation process. She is particularly interested in forensic interviewing and vicarious trauma.

LORI AVERY

Lori Avery received B.A. Communications from Queens University of Charlotte. She is the Chief Development Officer at Pats Place CAC. Lori joined the Pat's Place team in November 2015 after spending almost 13 years with LIFESPAN in Charlotte, North Carolina. Lori brings over 25 years of experience that includes fundraising, building community relationships and advocacy efforts. At Pat's Place Child Advocacy Center, Lori is responsible for development and fundraising efforts for the agency which encompasses grant writing, special events, donor stewardship and marketing and communications efforts. Originally from Pennsylvania, Lori lives in Charlotte with her husband and English Springer Spaniel, Cooper.

SHELLEY HITZEL

Shelley Hitzel is the Executive Director at the Child Advocacy Center of Niagara, where she has been on staff since 2010. She began her career as an emergency room victim advocate, providing crisis response and support to adult and child victims of crime and has held various supervisory roles at the CAC over the years, transitioning to the role of Executive Director in March 2020. Shelley holds a master's degree in social work and a bachelor's degree in Psychology and Criminal Justice. In addition to her work at the CAC, Shelley has been on staff at the Institute on Trauma and Trauma Informed Care since 2015. She serves as the Project Coordinator for SAMHSA's How Being Trauma-Informed Improves Criminal Justice System Response and as the Trauma Informed Child Welfare Liaison. Shelley has a passion for improving service delivery and workforce retention by increasing the knowledge and application of trauma informed care and trauma-informed supervision amongst agencies and professionals providing services to trauma survivors.

ANTHONY DEVINCENZO

Tony DeVincenzo is a Training Specialist with the Northeast Regional Children's Advocacy Center having previously served as the Director of Programs/MDT Coordinator for Deirdre's House, the Child Advocacy Center for Morris County, NJ. Prior to his employment at the CAC, Tony served 25 years in law enforcement, a majority of which involved investigating crimes against children. Tony retired as a Lieutenant from the Morris County Prosecutor's Office after supervising the Sex Crimes/Child Endangerment Unit. In addition to his law enforcement and CAC roles, Tony has been an adjunct faculty member at several colleges and has trained on a variety of topics including child abuse investigations, forensic interviewing of children, and the CAC/MDT model.

MYIA HILL

Myia Hill is the Communications Manager with Northeast Regional Children's Advocacy Center. In this position, Myia manages NRCAC's branding, marketing materials, website, and social media presence. She has worked in the non-profit sector for over 9 years in the primary areas of development, communications, and marketing. Myia obtained her bachelor's degree in marketing from SUNY Oswego.

DR. ANTHONY ORSINI

Dr. Anthony Orsini is a practicing intensive care physician, and author of the book, *It's All in the Delivery - Improving Healthcare Starting with a Single Conversation*. Widely considered an expert in communication, relationship building, and enhancing the patient experience, Dr. Orsini has been a frequent national speaker in both the healthcare and business industries. Profoundly impacted by an early career experience and the discovery that even the most successful and well-respected physicians often struggled with their communication skills, Dr. Orsini has spent the last 25 years developing proven communication techniques that teach others how to quickly form trusting relationships and navigate the most difficult conversations imaginable. In 2011, he founded *The Orsini Way*, a company that provides communication training for healthcare and business professionals. He has appeared in national news and his work has been featured in the most prestigious publications in business, healthcare, and HR.

NANCY HARRIS

Nancy's career in nursing spans nearly 40 years during which she has worked in pediatrics, neonatal ICU, hospital, and emergency services. Nancy earned her certification as an adult nurse practitioner from SAGE College in Albany, NY. Nancy has completed several sexual assault forensic examiner and pediatric trainings, and during her career she has performed over 1,800 sexual assault exams. Nancy was instrumental in developing a system wide program to include four hospitals and two Child Advocacy Centers in the capital region. The "Regional CAC program" has grown to 25 Counties in NY State where Nancy is currently the acting Medical Manager. Nancy is also co-founder for the TELESAFE Program in New York State which provides virtual care and assistance during a sexual assault exam to several hospitals in NYS. Nancy along with a team of colleagues created and provided a free pediatric SANE training for all medical providers in NYS and provides a preceptorship program within her Regional CAC locations in NYS.

JAY RIFENBARY

A resident of Saratoga Springs, NY, Jay is president of Rifenbary Training & Development, author of the international best-seller, "No Excuse! - Incorporating Core Values, Accountability and Balance into Your Life and Career," awarded "Book of the Year" by the North American Book Dealers Exchange; and author of "True To Your Core - Common Sense Values for Living Life to Its Fullest", and his most recent release "Return To Your Core - Principles for a Purposeful and Respected Life."

Jay is a professional speaker, trainer and consultant, and for over 30 years has provided his expertise in the areas of personal and professional core value development, leadership, and communication training to organizations, associations and schools across North America, Europe, Australia and Asia.

Jay received his Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Military Academy at West Point, with a concentration in Nuclear Physics.

DARIA EGAN

Daria Egan is a Special Agent currently assigned to the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) office in Albany, NY. Special Agent Egan began her law enforcement career in 2000, as a police officer with the City of Evanston, Illinois Police Department. In 2003, she began her federal law enforcement career as a Special Agent with the former U.S. Customs Service, which ultimately became HSI. In 2007, she became a certified digital forensics agent, trained to conduct forensic examinations on computers, mobile devices, and other digital media. In 2008, Special Agent Egan transferred to the HSI Albany office where she conducts investigations relating to transnational criminal organizations. She also currently performs duties as the office's victim witness coordinator providing services to the victims of crimes investigated by HSI, to include, child exploitation and human trafficking violations.

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