

# Academy Forum

*Continuing the Message of the Roper Victim Assistance Academy*

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue #31 - July 2013

## Just a Thought

*One of the most challenging but essential skills needed to be successful in the field of victim services is learning how to collaborate with other agencies. Dave Betz discusses the most common barriers to collaboration and shares insights on how we can overcome them*

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## Web Links

*You never know what resources await you on the world-wide web ...come see what our latest surfing expedition uncovered*

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## Save the Date!

*Find out what trainings and events are just around the corner. It looks like there are lots of ways to keep you busy this fall!*

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## Alumni Updates

*Always find yourself thinking, "I wonder what happened to..." Check out what your fellow Alumni are up to!*



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## Best Practices

*Looking for a collaborative victim services model to learn from? Read how the Network for Victim Recovery in DC has partnered with multiple agencies and programs in the community to provide victims a holistic and comprehensive set of services*

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## The 20/20

*Each newsletter get an inside look at one of the RVAAM peers - 20 questions, 20 unique answers*

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## Just a thought...

### *Collaboration in Victim Services*

Close your eyes and just imagine for one minute that you are the loved one of a victim of a traumatic crime or the non-offending parent of a child who has been abused. This is your first experience and introduction to the American criminal justice system. Information is flowing from several service providers; police, prosecution, judges, child protective services, and the list can go on and on. You try to navigate through the system by yourself for the next several months, if not years. You don't know who, if anyone, may reply to your cry for answers. If you get an answer, it is different each time you call, inconsistent at best, confusing at worst. In despair you cry out, yet no one answers. This is how it was for

many victims and families just a decade or two ago. Because of you, yes you, the one reading this, it is no longer this way!

In the last fifteen years (or more for those of you who are counting) the foundation for providing consistent services began to be built on solid ground. Prosecution offices and domestic violent prevention agencies were some of the first agencies to introduce the concept of victim advocates and services. Today it would be difficult to find a jurisdiction without some type of victim advocate or victim services (although I'm sure they are out there). Yeah to that!

Having spent 25 years in the law enforcement field; fourteen of those in the child abuse field; I have seen the need for and the acceptance of victim services evolve and admire those of you who help on a daily basis. To me, the victim advocates are the heroes that help the broken heal and become survivors. For the families that you help to heal, and for the victims who become survivors, you are their superheroes. With that said, collaborating

with anyone on anything is usually easier said than done. However, as resources are stretched and cases overlap, it is even more important that collaboration is occurring within victim services.



There are many obstacles that can prevent collaboration. Personal agendas, agency agendas, and team agendas may not always align and each can bring challenges which may not necessarily be in the best interest of a victim or their family. The list goes on for excuses why we can't, or should I say won't, collaborate

with other agencies to help fulfill a mission of helping a victim become a survivor. Something as simple as a personality (feel free to laugh out loud) can get in the way of doing what is best for a victim. I often joke when presenting about this topic in a room full of twenty people, we probably have thirty-seven different personalities present. The question is which one will show up today?

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EDITOR'S CORNER

*Greetings Alumni!*

*I hope everyone is enjoying the lazy days of summer, at least while you're not working! I know we have been extremely busy up here in Harford County, so I'm sure the rest of you have been quite busy as well, especially those of you in Baltimore City. Just remember you need some down time as well, don't neglect yourself!*

*As we start to gear up for the fall I want to let you all know that the VSPN is planning a 10th Anniversary Celebration for the Roper Victim Assistance Academy. But we need your help and ideas! If you are interested in sharing your thoughts, please contact the VSPN President, Amy Jarkiewicz at [piamy@ymail.com](mailto:piamy@ymail.com). Let's make this an awesome celebration as 10 years is quite the accomplishment!!*

*Finally don't forget that the Maryland Certification for Victim Service Providers is now up and running. If you are interested, go to [www.rvaam.org](http://www.rvaam.org) and under the certification tab you can download your application. Please make sure to follow all the instructions carefully so your application is not delayed. There is a payment form that has to be filled out and mailed to the address on the website. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.*

*Wishing you all the best ~ until next time...*

*Debbie Bradley, C.A., VASIII*

[bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org](mailto:bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org)

*"Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant." - Robert Louis Stevenson*

Web Links

*Although we have a virtual library at our fingertips every time we turn on the computer, we often lose sight of the forest through the trees just trying to navigate the world-wide web. Here are a few sites that relate to this issue's "Just a Thought" ... happy surfing!*

Want to learn more about the essential strategies needed to develop, maintain, and continue to empower the collaboration between



yourself and your client? The Vera Institute of Justice identifies and breaks down six critical categories and provides in-depth information on how to achieve success in collaboration. Go to [http://www.accessingsafety.org/index.php/main/main\\_menu/planning\\_for\\_change/developing\\_a\\_collaboration/how\\_cani\\_make\\_my\\_collaboration\\_succeed](http://www.accessingsafety.org/index.php/main/main_menu/planning_for_change/developing_a_collaboration/how_cani_make_my_collaboration_succeed)

The Office for Victims of Crime has created a site titled "Keys to Collaboration: Choosing, Nurturing, and Maintaining Successful Community Partnerships" to provide victim advocates tools and resources on how to build successful collaborative relationships within the community in order to better provide victims access to local resources and support. Learn more by visiting the site at [http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/publications/infores/ServingVictimsWithDisabilities\\_toolkit/collaboration.html](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/publications/infores/ServingVictimsWithDisabilities_toolkit/collaboration.html)

In 1997, Denver, Colorado was awarded a grant by the Office for Victims of Crime to develop a model that would improve the range and quality of services for crime victims as well as the victims' access to them. One of the requirements of

the grant was to demonstrate a commitment to the creative use of collaboration. Denver was extremely successful in attaining their goal and their collaborative model was highlighted in the following OVC Bulletin -

[https://www.ncjrs.gov/ovc\\_archives/bulletins/mcwedvs2000/516406.pdf](https://www.ncjrs.gov/ovc_archives/bulletins/mcwedvs2000/516406.pdf)

*"Let us not be blind to our differences, but let us also direct attention to our common interests and the means by which those differences can be resolved. And if we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity." - John F. Kennedy*

Save the Date

**The 39th Annual NOVA Conference**

September 15th - 18th, 2013, Hyatt Regency Columbus, Columbus, OH

This year's conference theme is "Implementing the Tools of our Trade to Build a Comforting Justice" and will offer over 100 workshops and plenary events. Registration is now open. For more information, visit NOVA's conference website at

<http://www.trynova.org/39novaconference/overview/>



**2014 RVAAM Academy**

June 2nd-6th, 2014, Bon Secours Spiritual Center, Marriottsville, MD

Although we just wrapped up this year's Academy, we already have next year's dates reserved!! So mark it on your calendars and start recruiting!! Additional notifications will go out when the application is posted on the RVAAM website - so stay tuned!



## Alumni Updates



*It seems like only yesterday when we were all together at the Academy. But in a blink of an eye another year has passed us by. Here's just a snapshot of some of the*

*special events and milestones our alums have experienced since we last met...*

### Look at Our Movers & Shakers!

**Dorothy "Dot" Anderson Holley (Class of 2013)** - Dot recently returned from a trip to Senegal, West Africa. She and her sister have a non-profit organization that integrates mental health and the arts, using African dance and drum (and other cultural forms) to help people heal.

**Debbie Bradley (Class of 2004)** - Debbie just became a grandmother for the second time on June 12th when her daughter gave birth to a second baby girl - Harper Olivia. Congratulations Debbie! Hugs to Mom, Baby Harper, and you!

**Eva Marie Kenealy (Class of 2011)** - Eva Marie recently was hired as the Director of Self-Defense and Martial Arts at Great Results Personal Training (GRPT). Eva Marie possesses a second degree black belt in both Tae Kwon Do and Hapkido. Congratulations Eva Marie on your new position!

**Autumn Linderborn (Class of 2011)** - This past May, Autumn was awarded her Master in Science in Criminal Justice from the University of Baltimore (with a specialization in Victimology & Victim Services). Autumn not only graduated with honors but she was also awarded the Dean's Council Award for being the top graduate

student in the College of Public Affairs. Way to go Autumn!!

## Best Practices

### Network for Victim Recovery of DC: Collaborative and Holistic Responses to Victim Services

Network for Victim Recovery of DC (NVRDC) is a comprehensive victim service provider serving all victims of crime within the District of Columbia. NVRDC offers holistic services through three specific programs: Therapeutic and Victim Advocacy; Criminal Legal Services; and Civil Legal Services. Collectively, these programs provide all survivors of crime with advocacy case management services which include crisis intervention, compensation assistance, housing resources, entries into mental health services, and internal referrals to NVRDC's legal services programs.

Additionally, NVRDC runs the Sexual Assault Crisis Response Project for the District - NVRDC case managers provide 24/7 crisis response advocacy to all survivors of sexual assault seeking a medical/forensics exam within the District. However approximately 25% of survivors that NVRDC sees come from surrounding jurisdictions in Maryland and Virginia. The same NVRDC advocate that responds to the hospital provides the survivors with continued follow-up supportive services through the entirety of the recovery process. NVRDC runs this project with other representatives of DC's Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), including the Metropolitan Police Department, U.S. Park Police, the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, the DC's Forensic Nurse Examiners, DC's Crime Lab, and the DC Rape Crisis Center.

While NVRDC opened its doors just over a year ago, the organization has already served 500 survivors of crime and has a 100% response rate to all advocacy calls at Washington Hospital Center. Additionally NVRDC's criminal legal services

program have served nearly 100 clients in just the first year.

NVRDC is led by two Co-Executive Directors - Nikki Charles and Bridgette Harwood. Each credits the collective efforts of other community service providers and system-based agencies within the District for being able to serve so many survivors of crime in just a short amount of time. Within the first month of opening, NVRDC spent hours connecting with other service providers to receive over 20 letters of support for the organizations first grant application. Since opening, NVRDC has created several Memorandums of Agreement to carry out the organization's mission with other entities, without duplicating efforts.

"It's this collaborative approach that truly allows service providers to come to each survivor with a victim centered approach that truly assesses the immediate and long-term needs," says NVRDC's Co-Executive Director and Director of Legal Services, Bridgette Harwood. "NVRDC has seen working partnerships allow us to connect our clients with other providers to truly meet all of their needs. We understand that we will not be able to offer every possible solution for each survivor but our network of partners allows us to connect survivors to trusted partners without concerns that the referral will allow the survivors to fall through the cracks."

If you would like to learn more about the collaborative partnerships NVRDC has built, please contact Bridgette Harwood at [Bridgette@nvrdc.org](mailto:Bridgette@nvrdc.org), or you can reach her by phone at (202) 742-1727.

\* Essay contributed by Bridgette Harwood.





## News From the Field

*Everyone knows that the field of victim services is always evolving. The challenge is to find a way to keep on top of all the changes ... we're here to help!*

**\* House Bill 250, Chapter 363: Criminal Procedure - Victims' Rights - Remedy and Priority of Restitution** - Expanding the applicability of specified appeal rights from a victim of a violent crime to a victim of a nonviolent crime; authorizing a victim to appeal to the Court of Special Appeals from a specified final order. Status of the Bill - Effective June 1st, 2013.

## Just a Thought (Cont.)

Another impediment to collaboration is what I like to call communication; actually, everyone calls it communication, I did not make it up. How we communicate, and how others perceive our message, can set the tone for collaboration. You may read this article and get a completely different meaning than the next person to read it. When I ask, most people will tell me they are good, or even great communicators. Most people who feel this way are in calm situations when there is a lack of stress or are those involved in successful collaborations. Some of you reading this are thinking right now, "he has never met me, I am the best

communicator in my office." I bet you are! However, let me throw a little stress at you, a deadline, six victims needing you right then, a phone ringing, kids texting, and just a pinch of competition or territorial issues, and I would be willing to bet (not really) that your style of communication will change. The great communicator will turn into the devil.

Okay, so what am I getting at in this article you ask? Good question. If you take away anything from what I've wrote, I want you to be proud of the foundation that you are building upon when we think of victim services. Here comes the "but" ... we have room for improvement. What do you want the next generation of advocates to say about this generation of advocates? I believe we would want them to acknowledge how well we built relationships with other service providers; that they would recognize there are no boundaries to providing services where we can help victims heal faster, navigate through the system with ease, and make a positive difference in the lives of everyone with whom we work. So what are you waiting for? Get out there and be a superhero!

*Essay contributed by Dave Betz*

## Certification News

*Want to learn more about the certification process and learn how you can be a cut above the rest? Here's what you need to know!*



There are three levels of certification in Maryland, each require a specific set of qualifications and are described in detail below:

**\* Level I (VASI)** - a) complete application packet; b) minimum of two years experience (paid or unpaid); c) 40 hours of training (RVAAM, NVAA, or other

SVAA); d) multiple choice exam; e) \$50 application processing fee

**\* Level II (VASII)** - a) complete application packet; b) minimum of five years experience (paid or unpaid); c) 80 hours of training (40 hours RVAAM, NVAA, SVAA and 40 hours advanced training and/or University level coursework in victim services, including 3 hours of Victims Rights training and 3 hours of Ethics in Victim Services training); d) written essay / short answer exam; e) \$75 application processing fee.

**\* Level III (VASIII)** - a) complete application packet; b) minimum eleven years experience (paid or unpaid); c) 120 hours of training (40 hours RVAAM, NVAA, SVAA and 80 hours advanced training and/or University level coursework in victim services, including 3 hours of Victims Rights training and 3 hours of Ethics in Victim Services training); d) oral presentation on approved topic in Victim Assistance; e) \$100 application processing fee.

All application materials and study guides for the written exams are available online at [www.rvaam.org](http://www.rvaam.org) (click on the Certification tab at the top of the page). For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact Debbie Bradley at [bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org](mailto:bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org) or by phone at (410) 836-5490.

### Congratulations to the following Certified Advocates!

Diane Champe - Level I

Lisa Faith - Level I

Janell Hale - Level I

Eartha Harris - Level II

Debbie Bradley - Level III

Anne Marie Litecky - Level III

Mona Louise Metz - Level III

Ruby Nelson - Level III

Victoria Thomas - Level III

# The 20 / 20

*Each newsletter we pose twenty questions to one of our members to get an inside look at who they are ... this month get to know Heather Pfeifer, Associate Director of RVAAM*

**My favorite TV show is ...**

I'm a Food Network junkie - I love Chopped, Cupcake Wars, Sweet Genius, etc.

**My favorite smell is ...**

It's a tie between an ocean breeze and the smell of autumn leaves and a fireplace burning

**If I were a crayon, the color I would be is..**

Tangerine

**When I was little, I wanted to be a (blank) when I grew up ...**

I wanted to be a prosecutor and then eventually work my way up to being a judge

**If I could go anywhere in the world, it would be**

...

I'd love to take a summer and hike through Europe with my husband

**The best piece of advice I've ever been given is ...**

Live in the now. You can't do anything about the past, nor can you control what is going to happen in the future. So focus on being fully in the present.

**Something I think I do well is ...**

Mentor others - I want all of my students to reach their potential. Sometimes they do not think they can do as well as I know they can, so I will push them to achieve their best.

**The thing I like the most about my current job is**

...

The autonomy - I may work unconventional and sometimes really long hours but I love that no one ever tries to micromanage how I spend my time

**My most memorable birthday in recent years was**

...

My 42nd birthday (last year) - my husband and two daughters and I celebrated in NYC ... great dinner and a Broadway show. Awesome!

**The last thing I did to pamper or treat myself was**

...

I bought myself a new Coach purse and wristlet - it's a happy orange combo that makes me think of summer

**My favorite movie is ...**

I have a couple "go to's" (depending on the mood I'm in): Gladiator, Shakespeare in Love, The Last Samurai ... I'm kind of an epic junkie

**If I had one extra hour of free time every day, I would use it by ...**

Curling up in bed and reading a good book

**What stresses me out most in my job is ...**

The end of semester chaos (e.g., grading papers/exams)

**The quality I appreciate most in others is...**

Empathy and kindness

**The quality I dislike the most in other is ...**

Arrogance

**My favorite thing to do to help unwind after a rough day is to ...**

Walk my pup and then watch one of my favorite shows with a glass of wine

**An occupation I wouldn't mind working in would be ...**

Professional organizer and decorator. I love finding new ways to use and showcase existing items

**An occupation I'm really glad I'm not working in is ...**

Any 9 to 5 office job

**My favorite professional sports team is...**

Green & Gold all the way ... Packers!

**One of my goals for 2013 is to ...**

Put together a strong portfolio for promotion to Full Professor

## What do you want to hear? Have any news to share?

*Are you itching to learn more about a particular issue in the field of victim services? The Editorial Board is always looking for new topics to profile in the newsletter that would be beneficial for our Alums both personally and professionally.*

*Please send any suggestions you might have about a topic to profile in one of our upcoming newsletters to Debbie Bradley at [bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org](mailto:bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org) ... We also are happy to share any information you have about job openings and professional trainings you might think your fellow Alums would benefit from!*

## Editorial Board

**Debbie Bradley — Editor**

**Dianna Abramowski — Assistant Editor**

**Keith Gethers — Assistant Editor**

**Ashley Fundack — Assistant Editor**

**Heather Pfeifer — Managing Editor**

## Alumni Directory

The 2013 Alumni Directory, which includes the addition of the most recent Academy class members, is available for distribution. However, we still would like your help to keep the Alumni Directory up to date! If any of your personal and/or professional information changes, please contact Debbie Bradley via email at [bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org](mailto:bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org) or by phone at (410) 836-5490.

**Watch for the next edition of the Academy Forum in October 2013**