



2019 - 2020

VERMONT VICTIM ASSISTANCE ACADEMY

Core Trainer Biographies

AMY FARR amy.farr@vermont.gov

Amy Farr is the Victim Advocate at the Vermont Attorney General's Office. She works directly with victims of crime and has also served on many state-wide boards, workgroups and task forces that have been convened to address victim rights, needs, and access to support.

JOHN GRANDI John.Grandi@vermont.gov

John is a Victim Advocate with the Windsor County State's Attorney's Office. He provides services and resources to victims of crime and their families. John is also a member of the Windsor County CAC and sits on the Windsor County SIU Board as Vice Chair. Before becoming a Victim Advocate, John worked as a Social Worker for the Vermont Department for Children and Families investigating abuse and neglect reports in the Hartford area. John graduated from Plymouth State University with a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Psychology and Law. Outside of work, John spends an inordinate amount of time playing Video Games and Dungeon's and Dragons with his friends. He is also intolerant to chicken.

ITA MENO itameno@aol.com

When they were 16 years old, Ita attended the Anytown Leadership Institute in San Antonio, TX. This experience provided her with the groundwork, and launching pad, they needed to enter the field of anti-racism, anti-oppression training and community building. Since being in Burlington, they have supported the work of Vermont Access to Reproductive Freedom, facilitated groups at Outright VT, served on multiple non-profit Boards of Directors, performed with activist-oriented drag performance groups, and actively worked statewide with a group of activists to add "Gender Identity and Expression" to the State of Vermont's list of protected classes.

Ita is a principle partner with CQ Strategies, LLC. CQ Strategies is a cultural competency consulting group that works with non-profits, business and government groups to understand the role that power and privilege play in our workplace and work towards dismantling this power through insight, empathy and intention. With a special fondness for pickup trucks, tool belts and the color pink, Ita lives in Burlington. They can often be seen traipsing about town in stripes, talking social dynamics, interrupting hurtful remarks and breaking up fights.

ANNE SMITH anne@vtnetwork.org

Anne Smith is an educator, facilitator and advocate working to uproot the causes of violence. Over 20 years, she has gained a breadth of experience providing direct services and advocacy with and on behalf of survivors of violence, facilitating education and outreach, and implementing programs in university, community and criminal justice settings.

Anne is the Director of Training and Leadership Development at the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. Anne holds a BA in Sociology from Gettysburg College and an MA in Education from The University of Vermont. She considers her most important life lessons to result from the wisdom of her two greatest teachers; her daughters. Anne lives in Vermont where she enjoys the mountains and water of her beautiful state and the nearby Adirondacks in all five seasons (including mud) with her family and friends.

DR. ARON STEWARD aron.steward@vermont.gov

Dr. Aron Steward completed a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology at SUNY Buffalo in 2007, where her areas of interest were alternative therapy modalities, violence prevention and intervention, clinician self-care, and qualitative research. Following graduate studies, the NJ DOC recruited Dr. Steward to develop behavior management programming in maximum security prisons for female offenders labeled most violent and aggressive and create intensive outpatient programming for the states' most persistently mentally ill female offenders. Following that, Dr. Steward supervised a Los Angeles County DCFS mental health team interacting with the highest risk foster care youth. Dr. Steward then accepted a position working for Los Angeles County law enforcement teams in community crisis response toward suicide and homicide prevention and school violence prevention. Most recently, Dr. Steward was the Chief of Psychological Services at Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center under DCF in Vermont. Currently, Dr. Steward is the Chief of Psychology for University of Vermont Health Network, Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital. She is currently co-chair of the state of Vermont Human Trafficking Taskforce. Dr. Steward's early professional experience with vicarious trauma elicited a desire to promote self-care, specifically educating other professionals about secondary trauma and self-care strategies. She is currently completing her MBA at UMASS Isenberg School of Management in healthcare administration.

ANDREA VAN LIEW, M.ED. andrea.vanliew@ccvs.vermont.gov

Andrea Van Liew is a certified Dialogue Education Teacher and Core Consultant with Global Learning Partners who works daily putting the principles into practice in almost all facets of training and consulting. Andrea Van Liew has been working as an educator and trainer for over 34 years in various capacities and with learners of all ages. She is formerly the Director of the Community Engagement and Training Department at the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services (VCCVS) in Waterbury, VT; and still directs the Vermont Victim Assistance Academy. She joined VCCVS in the fall of 2005 after spending the previous five years as a Training Specialist and Training Coordinator for the University of Vermont/Department for Children and Families, Child Welfare Training Partnership. Andrea built her family by first becoming a foster parent and then adopting her two daughters through the State of Vermont child welfare system. Andrea's skills include meeting facilitation, support group facilitation, leading organizational strategic planning, hosting events, moderating panel discussions and coordinating collaborative groups to meet common goals. She is a certified life cycle celebrant with the Celebrant Foundation & Institute and seeks to facilitate ceremonies and celebrations for life's milestones and transitions.

KAREN DOLAN kdolan@ESSEX.ORG

Karen Dolan has been a Restorative Justice Specialist at the Essex Community Justice Center since early 2016; coordinating community panels, assisting schools, and offering community trainings. In addition to that role, she is a coordinator and facilitator for Vermont's Safe Driving Program, working to address distracted driving in the state through a restorative curriculum. Previously, Karen spent five years, based at the women's correctional facility in South Burlington, working as a Program Manager for Vermont Works for Women and during that time she also had the pleasure of serving on the Burlington CJC's Parallel Justice Commission. The opportunity to observe the criminal justice system from a variety of perspectives has provided tremendous insight as Karen has developed her toolbox of restorative practices.

AMANDA ROHDENBURG amanda@outrightvt.org

Amanda Rohdenburg is the Associate Director at Outright Vermont. She earned a BA in Gender Studies and Political Science from Saint Michael's College and has been an advocate for queer and trans youth with Outright since 2014. When not working to build safe, healthy, supportive environments for youth, Amanda cooks all things from scratch and goes on adventures.

MARC WENNBERG marc@communityreentry.net

Marc Wennberg is the former director of the St. Albans Community Justice Center and has worked as a restorative justice consultant for the past four years. Marc conducts trainings in restorative justice and circle processes; uses a restorative approach to facilitate strategic planning and program development efforts; and supports the creative application of restorative values with offender reintegration programs. Independent Consultant, 802-249-0397
www.communityreentry.net

ERIKA REIL ericka@vcil.org

Ericka Reil is not only someone who is living with a disability, but also works as disability advocate for the Vermont Center for Independent Living, a disability rights organization. Where she has worked for 16 years. She is the Chair of several Boards dealing with protections and advocacy for people with disabilities. She travels around the state and country training on disability rights and culture. Currently she lives in Barre, Vermont with husband, Joe and her menagerie of animals. www.vcil.org

SAMANTHA TALBOT Samantha.Talbot@ccvs.vermont.gov

Samantha has been the Social Media and Communications Coordinator at the Center for Crime Victim Services for the past year. A graduate of UVM and career marketing and communications specialist, she has worked hard to establish a presence online for the Center for Crime Victim Services as the go to place for information for victims and providers alike. Beginning in June, Sam's role grew to also manage the CCVS's new podcast, "The Mend". At the same time, she took on the role of Training Coordinator and has enjoyed getting to know how to facilitate the Vermont Victim Assistance Academy. Sam lives in Essex Junction with her 6-year-old girl, Lilly and her 2-year-old boy, Ramsey. Feel free to reach out to Sam with any training, media inquiries or Academy questions!