

Interdisciplinary Approaches to Elder Abuse: Unlocking the Potential of Restorative Justice:

A Virtue Conference – Speaker Bios

Jenny Ackley

Jenny Ackley is the Director of the Abuse in Later Life Program at Vera House, and coordinates strategic initiatives in partnership with the Onondaga County Elder Justice Coalition. During her tenure, Vera House has been the recipient of three federal OVW grants to support the growth of the program. In 2020, Vera House received a U.S. DOJ grant entitled “Expanding CORE (Community-Based Options to Respond to Elder Abuse)” to pilot an elder abuse victim service program that incorporates restorative practices, civil legal services and case management in three senior housing facilities. Jenny frequently presents on the topic of elder abuse throughout New York State. She is active in the NYS Coalition on Elder Abuse, co-leads the Greater Syracuse Aging Services Coalition, and is a member of the Onondaga County Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Team, Interfaith Works Senior Companion Advisory Committee, FOCUS Age Friendly Workgroup, and the NYS Adult Abuse Training Institute planning committee. Ms. Ackley was awarded the Onondaga County Department of Aging & Youth’s Senior Services Professional Award, and the American Red Cross “Women Who Mean Business” honor; and her program was honored by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services as “Outstanding Partners in the Protective Services for Adults Delivery Network”. She received a B.S. in Accounting from Ithaca College and an MSW from Syracuse University.

Craig M. Boise

Dean Boise has been Dean and Professor of Law at Syracuse University College of Law since 2016. He is an innovator in legal education who has successfully led the College in navigating the technology-driven transformation occurring in legal education.

Dean Boise previously was Dean and Joseph C. Hostetler-BakerHostetler Chair in Law at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, and before that was professor and Director of Graduate Tax Programs at DePaul University College of Law. He began his academic career at Case Western Reserve University School of Law.

Dean Boise practiced tax law for nearly nine years at Cleary Gottlieb LLP and Akin Gump LLP, in New York, and at Thompson Hine LLP, in Cleveland, OH. He clerked for the Hon. Pasco M. Bowman II of the US Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

Dean Boise earned his J.D. from the University of Chicago, his LL.M. in Taxation from NYU, and his bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Maria Brown

Maria Brown is an Assistant Research Professor in Syracuse University's School of Social Work and Aging Studies Institute, a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America, and a 2008-2010 John A. Hartford Foundation Doctoral Fellow in Geriatric Social Work. Dr. Brown is a social gerontologist who uses the life course perspective to research health disparities and the later-life experiences of socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals, women, racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities, and dementia caregivers. Her research has received funding from the National Institute on Aging, the New York State Department of Health, and the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York. Her most recent research explores the potential of restorative practices in addressing elder abuse, the role of religion in family relationships, and evaluating the effectiveness of brief cognitive assessment and faith-based health education in the African American community. She has published her research in the *Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect*, *the Health Education Journal*, *Research on Aging*, *the Journal of Aging and Health*, *The Gerontologist*, *Supportive Care in Cancer*, *Women & Health*, and *the Journal of Gerontological Social Work*. Dr. Brown is co-author of several chapters on gerontological social work and LGBT aging and health disparities.

Marie-Therese Connolly

Marie-Therese Connolly is the author of *Aging Dangerously*, a forthcoming book of nonfiction (W.W. Norton) about elder abuse. She has been awarded fellowships from the MacArthur Foundation, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Yaddo and MacDowell Colony, and is adjunct faculty at USC's Davis School of Gerontology.

MT conceived of and was the original architect of the Elder Justice Act, enacted with the Affordable Care Act, has testified before Congress, and was the founding coordinator of DOJ's Elder Justice Initiative. At DOJ, she guided cases to redress abuse and neglect in facilities and launched the elder abuse research program, federal Elder Justice Work Group and elder abuse forensics projects.

Her current work focuses on research to define, measure and advance "success" in elder abuse interventions, including—prosecution, Adult Protective Services, advocacy, caregiver support, and multidisciplinary teams. MT has authored reports examining the LTC ombudsman program and role of criminal prosecutors on enhanced-multidisciplinary teams. She was lead co-author of the influential Elder Justice Roadmap Report synthesizing input from 700+ stakeholders and has written for medical, legal, social science, policy and news publications.

MT graduated from Stanford University, Northeastern University School of Law and clerked for the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

John Dussich

John Dussich has degrees in Clinical-Psychology (BS), Corrections/Criminology (MS), and Criminology/Sociology (Ph. D.) from Florida State University. He is the creator/founder of the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA), which he launched in Fresno in 1976 serving as first Executive Director. He was the World Society of Victimology (WSV) founding Secretary General for three 3-year terms; and a past President (2006-09). He served the US Army for 29 years in the Military Police Corps retiring as full Colonel. He taught 20 years in Japan (1993–2013) and was creator/director of the Tokiwa International Victimology Institute (TIVI) and editor-in-chief of its journal: International Perspectives in Victimology. He created the Mito (now Ibaraki) Victim Support Center in Japan November 1994. He is Criminology Professor Emeritus from California State University, Fresno. He is an international volunteer disaster responder. He founded Fresno's Elder Abuse Services, Inc. (2010). He has published 16 books, 106 articles and made 204 presentations (mostly on victim support and victimology). His most recent international work was as chair of WSV's victims' rights' United Nations Liaison-Committee. On April 12th, 2016, he received the Ronald Reagan Public Policy Award from the US Attorney General on behalf of his work with crime victims.

Jacqueline Gray

Dr. Jacqueline Gray has been the Director of the National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative (NIEJI) since it began in 2011. Dr. Gray and the NIEJI staff have worked to provide culturally relevant resources on indigenous elder abuse for American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian programs. She is a Research Associate Professor and Associate Director of the Center for Rural Health at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences. Dr. Gray has worked for over 35 years in Indian Country. She is a Choctaw and Cherokee descendent from Oklahoma.

Shelly L. Jackson

Shelly L. Jackson, Ph.D., is an Assistant Research Professor at the Institute of Law, Psychiatry and Public Policy, Department of Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Sciences, University of Virginia. In 2006, she and her colleague, Thomas L. Hafemeister, received a grant from the National Institute of Justice to study whether and how different forms of elder abuse are distinct. She has since published numerous articles, book chapters, and a book on the topic. Dr. Jackson's teaching and research has focused on vulnerable victims across the lifespan including of child abuse, intimate partner violence, elder abuse, and incarcerated individuals. She received her doctoral training in developmental psychology from the University of Vermont and completed a post-doctoral fellowship in psychology and law at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Patricia Kimball

Patricia is the Executive Director of the Elder Abuse Institute of Maine (EAIME), which she helped found in 2003. As a Board member, Patricia co-led the development of Martha's Cottage in 2009, Maine's first transitional housing for older victims of abuse and was hired as EAIME's first Executive Director in 2016. Prior to joining EAIME, Patricia was the founding director of the Restorative Justice Institute of Maine, whose mission is to foster restorative practices and philosophy across the state. It was her long-held belief in the potential of restorative justice to address the needs of elder abuse victims that led her to the Restorative Justice Institute.

Since 1988, Patricia has worked across a variety of systems in rural and urban settings with and on behalf of multiple constituency groups, from youth in treatment foster care in Ohio, to older residents in subsidized housing in Rhode Island, to women incarcerated in Maine. Her diverse roles have included direct service provider, community organizer, consultant and administrator. In her role with the EAIME, Patricia applies her varied experiences to realize the agency's goal of peace, safety and justice for all older individuals. Patricia holds graduate degrees in Human Services Administration and Community Economic Development.

Nina A. Kohn

Nina A. Kohn is the David M. Levy Professor of Law and Faculty Director of Online Education at Syracuse University College of Law. She is also the Solomon Center Distinguished Scholar in Elder Law with the Solomon Center for Health Law and Policy at Yale Law School, and a member of the American Law Institute. Kohn's research focuses on elder law and the civil rights of older adults and persons with diminished cognitive capacity. Her work has appeared in diverse fora including the *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review*, the *Washington University Law Review*, and the *Washington Post*. She is the author of *Elder Law: Practice, Policy & Problems* (Wolters Kluwer, 2d ed. 2020). Professor Kohn was the Reporter for the Third Revision of the Uniform Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Act, and is currently the Reporter for a Uniform Law Commission Study Group, Co-Chair of the Elder Rights Committee of the Individual Rights and Responsibilities Section of the American Bar Association; Co-Director of the Aging, Law, and Society Collaborative Research Network. She earned her earned an A.B. summa cum laude from Princeton University and a J.D. magna cum laude from Harvard University.

Jennifer Llewellyn

Jennifer Llewellyn is the Yogis and Keddy Chair in Human Rights Law at the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, Canada. Her teaching and research are focused in the areas of relational theory, restorative justice, truth commissions, peacebuilding, international and domestic human rights law. She has written and published extensively on the theory and practice of a restorative approach. Professor Llewellyn has advised governments and NGO's and supported projects and programs internationally including the Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program, the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, the HASA (Healing Approaches to Senior

Abuse) project, the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Jamaican government, the government of New Zealand and the United Nations. She was an appointed expert on the UN mechanism to review the UN Basic Principles for the Use of Restorative Justice in Criminal Matters. She facilitated the design process for a restorative public inquiry into the Home for Colored Children and served as a Commissioner for the Inquiry. She has co-edited two books in the area: *Being Relational: Reflections on Relational Theory and Health Law* (UBC Press) and *Restorative Justice, Reconciliation and Peacebuilding* (Oxford University Press). She was awarded the National Ron Wiebe Restorative Justice Award from Public Safety Canada in 2015 and was the 2018 recipient of the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council National Impact Award, the highest award for research achievement and impact in Canada.

Chris Marshall

Professor Chris Marshall has held the Diana Unwin Chair in Restorative Justice in the School of Government at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand since 2014. He is the author of seven books and over one hundred articles, book chapters and reference work entries, and has won several awards for his scholarly, practical and pedagogical work in the restorative justice arena. He has also been widely used as a conference speaker in New Zealand and around the world. The Chair in Restorative Justice was established through a funding partnership between the University, seven public sector agencies and one philanthropic trust, and is charged with extending the reach and deepening the quality of restorative practices across multiple sectors in society.

Mary Helen McNeal

Professor McNeal joined the Syracuse University College of Law faculty in 2005, and served as Director of the Office of Clinical Legal Education from 2005 until 2011. In 2008, she initiated a new Elder Law Clinic, which she continues to direct as the Elder and Health Law Clinic. Professor McNeal also teaches professional responsibility. Her research and writing focuses on elder law, with a particular emphasis clients with diminished capacity, and restorative justice and elder abuse; culture and lawyering; and clinical teaching. Her most recent publications, co-authored with Dr. Maria Brown, appear in the *Cardoza Journal on Conflict Resolution* and the *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect*.

Prior to coming to Syracuse, Professor McNeal was Clinic Director at the University of Montana School of Law, and previously taught at Boston College Law School and the University of Maryland School of Law.

Professor McNeal participates in the Syracuse area Elder Justice Task Force and the CNY Restorative Practices Working Group, and is Vice-Chair of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Aging and the Law Section.

Deborah J. Monahan

Deborah J. Monahan, Ph. D. is a Professor of Social Work at Syracuse University and she been a member of the faculty since 1990. She is the Interim Associate Dean for Research in the College of Sport and Human Dynamics. She is a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America and has been a member of their publications committee and secretary of the section on Social Research, Policy and Practice. She has also been a member of the board of directors of the American Society on Aging and served on their research committee for ten years. She has been a research investigator on projects related to the efficacy of support groups, community alternatives to long term care, family caregiving, kinship caregiving, and adolescent pregnancy prevention. She is co-author with Ronald Toseland and David Haigler of the book, *Education and Support Programs for Caregivers: Research, Practice and Policy* published by Springer (2011). Her publications appear in journals such as the *Gerontologist*, *Families in Society*, *Social Work*, *Nursing Economics*, *Journal of Gerontology*, *Psychology and Aging*, *Journal of Medical Education*, and the *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*. She teaches courses in social work practice, clinical evaluation, and processes of aging.

Lisa Nerenberg

Lisa Nerenberg has been a leader in the field of elder abuse prevention for over 35 years. She is Executive Director of the California Elder Justice Coalition, which was formed in 2012 to provide a voice from the field to state policy makers, and an instructor at City College of San Francisco, where she teaches classes in gerontology, elder abuse, and ageism. She was the founding director of the San Francisco Consortium for Elder Abuse Prevention, which piloted the nation's first elder abuse multidisciplinary team and other widely-replicated services. She has presented at hundreds of professional forums, testified before Congressional committees, served on governmental advisory boards, and written extensively about elder abuse, undue influence, elder justice, public health approaches to preventing elder abuse and health disparities, and related topics. Her newly released *Elder Justice, Ageism and Elder Abuse* (Springer, 2019) offers a framework for promoting individual rights and social justice in aging policy and programs. Her earlier *Elder Abuse Prevention: Emerging Trends and Promising Strategies* (Springer, 2008) describes what the public, government, agencies, and advocates can do to prevent abuse, treat its effects, and ensure justice.

Ashley Rivera

Ashley Rivera is a Peacemaking Associate at the Syracuse Peacemaking Project, a program of the Center for Court Innovation. Ashley utilizes the Native American practice of Peacemaking to facilitate Peacemaking circles as a form of conflict resolution, Peacemaking enables those in conflict to share their story without interruption and come to a common resolution for repair.

Ashley has been trained by Native American Peacemaking experts, including Ray Deal and Sara Pierce of the Navajo Nation and Wendy Hill and Leroy Hill of the Cayuga Nation. Ashley is a first generation college student that attended Utica College. Ashley has a big heart for her community; prior to becoming a Peacemaking Associate, Ashley designed and implemented programming in the Syracuse City School District via the Book Buddies program and she was a volunteer peacemaker for five years, sitting on dozens of cases for youth and Spanish-speaking families. Ashley is bilingual in English and Spanish. As a Syracuse resident, Ashley is honored to serve and strengthen her community at large.

Sarah Reckess

Sarah Reckess is the Upstate New York director of the Center for Court Innovation, a nonprofit organization headquartered in NYC that works toward a more humane and effective justice system. Since joining the Center in 2010, Sarah has worked with state and tribal jurisdictions around the United States to implement and test problem-solving court initiatives, including the planning and implementation of the Syracuse Peacemaking Project. She has trained over 60 community volunteers and numerous community organizations for the project, which diverts cases from the criminal and juvenile justice systems and into the community for healing and accountability.

In addition, Sarah is a SAMHSA-trained trauma-informed care trainer and has recently worked on a series of legal education programs called “Trauma Informed Lawyering.” In collaboration with the Syracuse Police Department, she facilitates community-police dialogues with officers and Syracuse residents to find common ground and explore ways to increase trust and develop strong relationships.

Tony Rosen

Dr. Rosen is a researcher in elder abuse and geriatric injury prevention at Weill Cornell Medical College and a practicing Emergency Physician at New York-Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Rosen’s research focuses on improving identification, intervention, and prevention of elder abuse in the ED and other health care settings. His research has explored forensic injury patterns in physical elder abuse and health care utilization among elder abuse victims using Medicare claims data and data mining / machine learning approaches. Dr. Rosen has also led the development of an Emergency Department-based multi-disciplinary Vulnerable Elder Protection Team (VEPT) to assess, treat, and ensure the safety of elder abuse and neglect victims while collecting evidence and working closely with the authorities. His work with collaborators also explores the optimal role of prosecutors in elder abuse response. He completed his residency training in Emergency Medicine in 2014 at New York-Presbyterian Hospital and completed a Geriatric Emergency Medicine Fellowship at Weill Cornell in 2016. He received his MD from Weill Cornell Medical College and MPH in epidemiology from UCLA.

Erika Sasson

Erika Sasson, BCL, LLB, LLM, is the director of restorative practices at the Center for Court Innovation, overseeing the Center's restorative practice initiatives across a broad range of demonstration projects. She is currently overseeing a multi-year randomized controlled trial of restorative practices in five high schools in Brooklyn with high suspension rates. She also directed the first federally-funded project to explore the national landscape of restorative practices in cases of intimate partner violence and sexual assault, and is currently completing a citywide blueprint to that effect. She has directed the Center's interventions in juvenile justice and gender-based violence as part of a USAID-funded project in Guatemala. Ms. Sasson previously oversaw the planning and implementation of the Red Hook peacemaking program, the first program of its kind in a state court system, and which was awarded the 2015 Innovations in Criminal Justice Award by the Association for Prosecuting Attorneys. She previously worked on the MacArthur Safety and Justice Challenge, assisting jurisdictions in finding ways to reduce the over-reliance on jail and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in its use. She designed and is currently teaching a course entitled, *Origins, Evolution, and Critical Issues in Restorative Justice* at Vermont Law School. Prior to joining the Center, she worked in Toronto as a federal prosecutor, where she handled drug, gun, and gang cases. She has completed fellowships in human rights law in Sri Lanka, Ecuador, and Israel. Ms. Sasson moved to New York in 2009 to attend New York University School of Law, where she received an L.L.M. in criminal justice. She is raising a family with her husband in Brooklyn, NY.

Merril Silverstein

Merril Silverstein, Ph.D., is the inaugural holder of the Marjorie Cantor Chair in Aging Studies at Syracuse University in the Maxwell School Department of Sociology and Falk College Department of Human Development and Family Science. He received his doctorate in sociology from Columbia University. In over 150 research publications, he has focused on aging in the context of family life, with an emphasis on life course and international perspectives. He serves as principal investigator of the Longitudinal Study of Generations and has had projects in China, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Israel. He is a Brookdale Fellow and Fulbright Senior Scholar and between 2010-2014 served as editor-in-chief of *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*.

Coleta Walker

For 15 years Coleta Walker has dedicated herself to educating, facilitating dialogues, and providing services to various individuals and organizations. Ms. Walker has worked for The Center for Court Innovation (CCI) for seven years, primarily at The Red Hook Community Justice Center, developing curriculum and overseeing daily operations. Ms. Walker and her team mediate disputes in criminal cases between family members, neighbors, and small businesses,

and domestic abuse survivors and abusers. Currently Ms. Walker works as the Director of Community Contracts and provides Restorative Practice training for Juvenile Detention Centers and ACS Sites. Red Hook's Peacemaking program has been recognized as a leader in Restorative Practices.

Prior to joining CCI, Ms. Walker's diverse experiences included providing art therapy to inmates at Rikers Island and at-risk adolescents at the Brunswick Psychiatric Facility. Through art therapy, Ms. Walker provided participants an opportunity to engage in meaningful counseling sessions on topics like conflict resolution, consequential thinking, positive/negative decision making, increasing independence, and reducing recidivism. In addition, Ms. Walker has assisted and advocated for survivors of domestic abuse, and provided essential therapy for women and children affected by abuse. Currently, Ms. Walker volunteers with special needs children ages 3-5 at the Brookville Center for Children Services. Ms. Walker received her B.A. from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University and her Master's degree from Long Island University Post.

John Williams

John is an emeritus Professor of Law at Aberystwyth University in Wales and has authored many papers on older people and human rights. He has presented papers at international conferences including the International Academy of Law and Mental Health, the World Congress of Gerontology, and the International Congress of Psychology and Law. Each year he presents at Harvard Medical School's Program in Psychiatry and the Law.

In 2012, he was appointed to the UN Expert Panel on human rights and older people. He advised the Health and Social Services Committee of the National Assembly for Wales on the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill, and the Welsh Government's Safeguarding Advisory Panel. He is a member of the Minister's Advisory Forum on Ageing. In addition, he has presented evidence to the Westminster Parliament on the law relating to mental capacity.

He has made many media appearances on elder abuse and the human rights of older people.

John has chaired several Domestic Homicide Reviews. He was a member of the Commissioner for Older People Northern Ireland's investigation into abuse and neglect in Dunmurry Manor Care home in Northern Ireland.

Janet Wilmoth

Janet Wilmoth has a Ph.D. in Sociology and Demography, with a minor in Gerontology, from the Pennsylvania State University. She is a Professor and Chair, Sociology Department, Director of the Aging Studies Institute, and a Research Affiliate in the Center for Policy Research and Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion at Syracuse University. Her research utilizes quantitative methods to understand later life well-being from a life course perspective. She has published in

the areas of older adult migration, living arrangements, and health status. Her recent research explores how military service shapes various life course outcomes related to marriage and family, economic well-being, and disability. Her research has received funding from the National Institute on Aging, the Social Security Administration, and the National Poverty Center. Professor Wilmoth has authored over 60 articles and book chapters, and coedited *Gerontology: Perspectives and Issues*, 3rd and 4th Editions, *Life Course Perspectives on Military Service*, and *Later-Life Social Support and Service Provision in Diverse and Vulnerable Populations*.

Jocelyn Yerxa

Jocelyn has a passion for making the world a better place. She has rarely met a complex social problem she hasn't loved to dig into and try to understand on a deeper level. With an academic background in sociology, philosophy and criminology, working on and understanding complex social problems has been something that has motivated Jocelyn in her career and volunteer endeavours. For the past decade, her work with the Department of Seniors has focused on population aging. Many of those years primarily related to safety and security for older people, but also age-friendly communities and positive aging. One of the main systemic change projects during that time was working with a passionate group of diverse people to develop a restorative approach to senior safety. For the past two years, she has co-lead the province's social innovation lab focused on population aging, which has resulted in many lessons learned. Jocelyn lives, with her dog, cat and 6 vintage mopeds, in Halifax, Nova Scotia – too far from her son, but close to her parents and sisters.