

## Planning Committee Bios

16<sup>th</sup> Annual NYC Elder Justice Conference

A Path to Healing: Innovative and Restorative Approaches to Elder Justice



**Martha H. Pollack LCSW-R**  
*Conference Chair*

Martha H. Pollack is the Associate Director of Elder Abuse Prevention Services and Professional Training at JASA where she has worked since 2011. Her portfolio includes oversight of the JASA Elder Abuse Prevention Program. She also coordinates the JASA Elder Justice Training Institute and serves as chair of the Annual New York City Elder Justice Conference. Ms. Pollack co-leads the NYS Board of Education Social Work Continuing Education program at JASA. She has worked in the field of geriatric social work for close to 40 years.

Ms. Pollack is an Adjunct Professor at the Touro College Graduate School of Social Work. She received her BA from Brown University in 1976 and her MSW from Columbia University School of Social Work and an MA in Jewish Studies from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1983.

A special *thank you* to Sharon Steinberg, *Conference Assistant*, for her dedication to making this conference a success!



**Paul L. Caccamise, LMSW, ACSW**

Paul L. Caccamise, LMSW, ACSW is Vice President for Program at Lifespan of Greater Rochester, a not-for-profit aging service provider in upstate New York. Since 2002, he has provided administrative and clinical oversight for agency programs with a focus on elder abuse programs, and services targeting older adults at risk of mistreatment, including the Upstate Elder Abuse Center, Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman, Guardianship, and Geriatric Addictions Programs. Paul oversees Lifespan's role in implementing the statewide Enhanced Multidisciplinary Team (E-MDT) initiative. He is part of the team that organized and implemented the 2022 NYS Elder Abuse Summit. He was also the project director for the New York State Elder Abuse Prevalence Study conducted by Lifespan, Weill Cornell Medical Center and NYC Department for the Aging from 2007-2010. Prior to coming to Lifespan, Paul served in a number of positions at Monroe County Department of Social Services including as administrator for Adult Protective Services from 1985-2002.



**Donna Maria Cooper**

Donna Maria Cooper is the Training Director from the Office of Policy, Procedures and Training (OPPT) for the Adult Protective Services (APS) program for the New York City-Human Resources Administration, (NYC-HRA). She has more than 35 years of social services experience with 6yrs. as a dedicated Bronx-APS Supervisor and 7yrs. as the Training Director for APS. Donna's main responsibility is to provide NYC-wide APS training for HRA/APS and Contract Vendor APS. She's known for implementing new and creative training methods, designing APS curriculum and establishing a culture of continuous learning. As a certified Mental Health First Aide trainer, Donna is charged with training HRA employees to recognize symptoms of mental health problems and offer the appropriate help and support until professional treatment is obtained or the crisis is resolved. Donna is also a member of the Association for Talent Development and the National Adult Protective Services Association. She sits on the steering committees of the Jewish Association Serving the Aging (JASA) NYC Elder Abuse Conference and the Adult Abuse Training Institute (AATI) through the Learning and Development Projects at the Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College.

## Planning Committee Bios

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### 16<sup>th</sup> Annual NYC Elder Justice Conference

#### A Path to Healing: Innovative and Restorative Approaches to Elder Justice



#### **Maureen Curtis, LMSW, MPH**

Maureen Curtis is responsible for development and oversight of Safe Horizon's Criminal Justice Programs with a staff of more than 300 co-located in family court, criminal court, Family Justice Center and precinct locations city-wide and manages a budget of more than 20 million. She has worked more than 35 years in the field of victimization and has extensive knowledge of victims' rights within the criminal justice and housing systems. Maureen started her career as an Advocate working in a NYPD police precinct in the Bronx as part of the Domestic Violence Police Program (DVPP) and when

promoted to the Director of DVPP helped expand this program over the years into 26 police precincts in NYC. DVPP led to the creation of the Crime Victim Assistance Program (CVAP) that places Advocates in every NYC police precinct and provides services to all victims of crime. She helped launch CVAP and currently provides senior leadership for its staff. Maureen has designed and provided training for law enforcement and community members on topics such as victim safety, offender accountability, housing options, and the criminal justice response to domestic violence.

Maureen provided assistance for victims of September 11th that included trauma informed supportive services and helping victims navigate various government systems to secure their rights. Since then, she has worked with local and federal agencies to assist other victims of terrorist crimes. Maureen worked for the Safe Horizon Domestic Violence Accountability Program (DVAP) as a facilitator and program supervisor and helped develop the curriculum used to facilitate classes held with men who battered their partner.

Lastly, Maureen was instrumental in creating and introducing a new practice for Safe Horizon staff in their work with clients; led the training for supervisors in the implementation of this model of client centered practice; and continues to provide support and guidance to help staff develop their skills and enhance their knowledge. She created a workshop that addresses the successes and challenges staff may face when implementing client centered practice at sites that are co-located in the criminal justice system.

Maureen is a licensed social worker and also holds a Master's in Public Health.



#### **Donna Dougherty, Esq.**

Donna Dougherty is the Senior Director of Legal Services for Elder Justice. She is a 30-year veteran of JASA. In her role, she oversees a 20+ person legal team that provides direct legal services to thousands of older adults each year in the areas of evictions and foreclosures, financial exploitation and fraud, public benefits, healthcare, and elder abuse.

For nearly three decades, Donna has taught negotiating, interviewing, and counseling to law students at Universities including St. John's Law School, Cardozo Law School, and NY Law School.

Donna is a member of the NYC Bar-Mortgage Foreclosure Task Force, NYC Elder Abuse Center Steering Committee, Queens Bar Association, and Landlord/Tenant Committee. Donna received her undergraduate degree from SUNY Oneonta and her Juris Doctor Degree from SUNY Albany School of Law.

## Planning Committee Bios

16<sup>th</sup> Annual NYC Elder Justice Conference

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### **Florian Edwards, MSW**

Florian Edwards is JASA's Senior Director of Protective Services, which entails oversight of Adult Protective Services (APS), Elder Justice Prevention Services, and the Annual Elder Justice Training Institute. Florian has provided individual and group therapy in her professional work with victims of domestic violence, elder abuse, human trafficking and modern day slavery. She is a core member of the Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Team (EMDT). She is passionate about fighting for social justice, especially for vulnerable and at risk populations.

Florian attended CUNY's Herbert H. Lehman College where she received her Bachelor's degree in Social Work in 2002, with honors. Florian attended Fordham University's Graduate School of Social Service where she received her Master's degree in Social Work in 2004. Florian remains an active member of the National Association of Social Workers.



### **Jenna Gladfelter, MS**

Jenna Gladfelter is the Director of Membership at LiveOn NY, which represents the diverse network of nonprofits helping older New Yorkers age in their communities. With over 100-member organizations, Jenna leads the convenings and offerings for said members such as peer communities, professional development opportunities, and events such as LiveOn's Annual Conference, the largest aging conference in New York. Before joining the LiveOn NY team in 2016, she began her professional career working outside of Washington, D.C. with adults with developmental disabilities. Jenna earned

a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Liberty University and a Master of Science in Human Services Management from McDaniel College, in which she was a participant in the Target-McDaniel Human Services Program, designed to train individuals for leadership positions in community-based human services programs.



### **Rev. Jesus Laguerra**

Rev. Jesus Laguerra performs as Intake/Outreach worker at Neighborhood SHOPP VIP. He obtained his BA in Social Science (Summa cum laude) at Nyack College. His theological studies in pastoral counseling and missiology were completed at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. He is an ordained minister with American Baptist Churches and is a founding member of Association of Hispanic Theological Educators. Jesus has worked with many diverse immigrant groups in both community agencies and local churches in the Northeast as well as Puerto Rico.



### **Cheryl Lee, LMSW**

Cheryl Lee LMSW, is currently the Elder Abuse Coordinator at the NYC Department for the Aging (DFTA) in the Elderly Crime Victims Resource Center. Cheryl acts as a senior project leader for all DFTA funded Elder Abuse Programs and Enhanced Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT's). Cheryl facilitates communication between her DFTA colleagues and programs working with elder abuse clients to help optimize the clients' well-being, safety and the coordination of services. In 2017, Cheryl's initial role at DFTA was as the Supervisor of the Elderly Crime Victim Resource Center.

Prior to moving to DFTA, Cheryl spent nine years at JASA as the Program Director of the JASA Legal/Social Work Elder Abuse Program (LEAP). During her time at JASA, she also facilitated trainings and community

## Planning Committee Bios

### 16<sup>th</sup> Annual NYC Elder Justice Conference

#### A Path to Healing: Innovative and Restorative Approaches to Elder Justice

outreach to service providers and seniors on elder abuse. She was trained by the U.S. Department of Justice, Nation Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life, to facilitate better collaboration between agencies serving victims of abuse. Cheryl was a member of the New York City Elder Abuse Center (NYCEAC) multidisciplinary team in Brooklyn. She was also a member of the New York State Judicial Committee on Elder Justice, a committee trying to improve access to the court system for older adults.

Cheryl transitioned from working on Wall Street to the field of Social Work in 2002. Cheryl attended the Brooklyn Campus of Long Island University where she received her Bachelor's degree in Social Work in 2006, with honors, Suma Cum Laude. Cheryl attended the Advanced Standing Program at Fordham University Graduate School of Social Services where she received her Master's degree in Social Work in 2007.



#### **Meredith Levine, LMSE, APHSW-C**

Meredith Levine is an Elder Justice Specialist at The Weinberg Center. Meredith has worked extensively with older adults in both long-term care and community-based settings. She is passionate about person-centered dementia care, the prevention and treatment of delirium in hospitalized older adults, and palliative care. She is an advocate for trauma-informed care and advance care-planning. Meredith graduated from Cornell University with Bachelor of Arts in English and Government. She received her Master of Social Work from Columbia University, where she focused on Advanced Clinical Practice in Aging.

For her second year of graduate school, she was selected by The Social Work Leadership Institute as a fellow for the Hartford Partnership in Aging Education Program.



#### **Katherine Martinez, LMSW**

Katherine Martinez, LMSW, is the CEO of Neighborhood SHOPP. Katherine is a Licensed Social Worker with over 20 years' experience in Non Profit Management, Senior Services, Child Welfare, Family and Kinship Caregiver Services, Community Based Programming and Development, Housing Management and Community Health Care Services.



#### **Ayana Mortley**

Ayana Mortley is the Training Coordinator for the NYC Elder Abuse Center (NYCEAC). She collaborates with team specialists to design, facilitate, and coordinate workshops about NYCEAC's programs, elder abuse, and geriatric medicine. She also conducts outreach to internal and external constituents to build networks in NYCEAC's expanding catchment area. Ayana developed a passion for elder justice during her time as a social worker for the Human Resources Administration Adult Protective Services program, where she developed and facilitated intervention plans for high-risk vulnerable adults. Ayana received her B.A. in Sociology from Wesleyan University and has an M.Ed in progress from Rutgers University.

## Planning Committee Bios

### 16<sup>th</sup> Annual NYC Elder Justice Conference

#### A Path to Healing: Innovative and Restorative Approaches to Elder Justice



#### **Enid Ocasio**

Enid Ocasio is an Administrative Community Relations Specialist at the Office of Chief of Department, Domestic Violence Unit at the New York City Police Department (NYPD).

In 28 years with the NYPD, Enid Ocasio has not only been collaborating, networking and partnering with units within the department but has also been doing the same with outside entities from New York State, New York City agencies, private and non-for-profit organizations. All with the goal to help members of the service, NYC residents and visitors on a number of concerns and matters.

Enid's passion for aiding and assisting New Yorkers began in the early 90's as a Police Administrative Aide in the complaint room, assisting complainants file reports for a variety of offenses. In addition, she identified crimes in order to make sure they were accurately reported for Crime Analysis statistics.

Enid also worked closely with the precinct's Special Operations Lieutenant in what was then called Community and Problem Oriented Policing (CPOP) unit which serviced community residents' concerns as simple as quality of life to criminal activity.

Enid then continued to work in other units in the NYPD, such as the Deputy Commissioner of Legal Matters, Document Production Unit, Deputy Commissioner's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and now at the Office of Chief of Department, Domestic Violence Unit.

Enid continues to show endurance and a willingness to learn, enhancing her knowledge, skills and understanding on community concerns. Thereby excelling in continuous growth with community relations within the department and throughout the New York City area and further.



#### **Geoff Rogers**

Geoff Rogers has more than three decades of professional experience helping individuals and organizations learn, manage, change, and seize new opportunities. Geoff is currently the Director of Learning & Development Projects at the Silberman School of Social Work of Hunter College. Prior to coming to Hunter in 2007, Geoff was director of operations for the New York City Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). He has also worked in advertising, publishing, and marketing, and served as a director of special projects, director of training, and director of operations for New York City Adult Protective Services. Geoff's unusual

background spanning creative industries, public administration and management consulting informs his work at Silberman to develop learning opportunities that engage a diverse array of human services professionals. Geoff has a BA in European history and English from Colby College



#### **Aurora Salamone, MPH**

Aurora has worked in the field of gerontology for over three decades after receiving her Master's in Professional Studies (MPS) in Gerontological Service Administration from the New School. She is currently the Director of the Office of Elder Justice at the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA). The Office includes the Elderly Crime Victims Resource Center, elder abuse contracted services, MDTs in NYC, the Bill Payer program, and the Assigned Counsel Project.

Over the past three decades, Aurora has spearheaded and received funding on a range of projects addressing elder abuse in NYC. She has had a hand in orchestrating over \$5.5 million dollars in city contracts. This includes 7 discretionary domestic violence

## Planning Committee Bios

### 16<sup>th</sup> Annual NYC Elder Justice Conference

#### A Path to Healing: Innovative and Restorative Approaches to Elder Justice

contracts including from funding from the NYS Office of Victim Services, proposed and received funds from OMB to fund 5 community based elder abuse programs, as well as funding to create 5 citywide Elder Abuse Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT).

Piloted, and incubated the “Providing Options to Elderly Clients Together” (PROTECT), within the ECVRC unit, the first evidence based mental health treatment tailored specifically for depressed elder abuse victims. This program received the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging “Aging Innovations and Achievement Award” and has been expanded citywide, benefiting elder abuse victims around the city. Aurora was directly involved in the Elder Abuse Prevalence Study in New York State (the first of its kind in the United States). She received the Advocate of New York City Award, Mayor’s Office to End Domestic and Gender–Based Violence.



#### **Loangys Sanchez, MSW**

Loangys Sanchez, MSW, is the Program Director of the Violence Intervention & Prevention (VIP) Program, which entails the Elder Abuse and Crime Victims Assistance Program at Neighborhood SHOPP. Loangys was promoted to Program Director after working in the field as the Elder Abuse Social Worker since 2015. Loangys holds a Master's Degree in Social Work from Lehman College. Additionally, she is a certified Relationship-Centered Communication Specialist and a SIFI Field Instructor. Loangys also has prior experience within the youth population. Overall, she carries a strong passion for promoting well-being, safety, and independence to

any vulnerable population utilizing the self-help model within her practice.



#### **Margaret M. Woods, LMSW, ASW-G, ACSW, CCM**

Margaret M. Woods is a licensed gerontological social worker who graduated from NYU Silver School of Social work in 2015 and is a member of Phi Alpha Honor Society. Margaret has a post-master certificate from the NYU Zelda Foster Studies Program in Palliative and End of Life Care as well as Seminar in Field Instruction (SIFI) Certification from NYU. Margaret has experience in field instruction, clinical, community-based, and medical social work which included a Fellowship at the VA Medical Center in Manhattan in Palliative and End of Life care working with our nation’s veterans and their families. Since graduation, she

has worked for the Carter Burden Network in the Geriatric Case Management Unit assisting homebound older adults and their caregivers with direct services before assuming the director’s position for CEMAPP (Community Elder Mistreatment Abuse Prevention Program) in June 2021.



#### **Jeanne Zieff, MSW**

Over the past 12 years, Jeanne Zieff, CASC Elder Abuse Director, and her dedicated staff have been on a mission to bring awareness to the all too frequently concealed crime of Elder Abuse. As a passionate advocate for Older Adults, Jeanne is a professional Social Worker who takes pride in challenging the atrocities that victims have suffered. She and her team work diligently with survivors to organize a robust plan of action that includes providing linkage to long term resources. Jeanne and her team value opportunities to provide community awareness of Elder Abuse through education and advocacy in an

endeavor to reach this vulnerable but often marginalized population of victims. Her personal goal is to continue this noble work: ensuring that every older adult on Staten Island is safe and living their best quality of life! It is an honor for Jeanne to work for the Community Agency for Senior Citizens (CASC) with an amazing and dedicated staff.