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Special points of interest:

- > Peer Support & Officer Wellness
- > Procedural Justice Workgroup
- > Probation Practice Tips
- > Upcoming Webinars

### **OPCA Supports Annual NYS Probation Officer Association Training Conference**

The DCJS Office of Probation and Correctional Alternatives was pleased to support the Annual Conference of the NYS Probation Officers Association, which was held July 26-29 in Syracuse. More than 180 probation professionals from throughout the state attended this year’s program entitled, “30 Years of Growth, Reflection and Transformation.” This year marked the 30th Anniversary of the first conference. OPCA has continued to support the evidence-based training of probation professionals by providing more than thirty scholarships for conference registration. The conference presents a unique opportunity for probation officers to receive training on a multitude of current and important subjects. OPCA staff led four workshops on topics related to employment, officer wellness, the role of the Probation Supervisor, and addressing gender-based violence.

The 2023 “State Director’s Award for Outstanding Service by a Probation Officer” was awarded to Cayuga County Probation Supervisor John Madden. This annual award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated exceptional service, commitment, and professionalism which has significantly contributed to the field of community corrections. Probation Supervisor Madden was nominated by Probation Director Jay DeWispelaere, who

stated John Madden has led his department in Family Court and juvenile justice related functions and collaborated with the Family Access to Service Team (FAST) to ensure justice-involved youth benefit from more effective and efficient services. He was applauded for his leadership with the eConnect program and streamlining the referral process for youth in need of mental health services. Director Maccarone recognized his devotion to probation, family, and his faith as most honorable. Congratulations Probation Supervisor Madden on this well-deserved accomplishment!

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## Probation Quality Assurance Systems Training Held Aug 15.

On Aug. 15, more than 170 probation professionals attended the Quality Assurance Programs Webinar delivered by OPCA staff. The purpose of the webinar was to highlight for probation directors and supervisors the benefits of implementing a department quality assurance program, which ensures documented standards for work performance, personnel training, as well as the identification of areas for practice improvement. Implementation of a sound quality assurance program provides an internal system of checks and balances that encourages a culture of improvement, collaboration and supports best practice. Ultimately, it results in improved outcomes for individuals on supervision, and enhanced victim and community safety. Representatives from Westchester, Onondaga, and Monroe County probation departments shared information on their quality assurance programs and discussed strategies for working with probation officers and probation supervisors to garner support for such programs.

A recording of the webinar has been made available [here](#).

Should you have any questions, please contact Danielle Brendese, Community Correction Representative 2, at [Danielle.Brendese@dcjs.ny.gov](mailto:Danielle.Brendese@dcjs.ny.gov) or Andrea Burton, Community Correction Representative 1, at [Andrea.Burton@dcjs.ny.gov](mailto:Andrea.Burton@dcjs.ny.gov).

## NYS Twelfth Annual Ignition Interlock Program Conference Held Aug 8.

On Aug. 8, OPCA convened the Twelfth Annual Ignition Interlock Program Conference in Albany at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center. The conference drew 118 individuals from 35 counties, six state agencies and all four of New York's qualified ignition interlock manufacturers. The conference included sessions on DWI Traffic Stops in NYS, US Ignition Interlock Trends, Breath Alcohol Ignition Interlock Devices, Identifying and Supervising People Convicted of DWI Offenses with Co-Occurring Mental Health Concerns, Ignition Interlock Non-Installer Enforcement, and breakout sessions with each of the manufacturers. DMV Commissioner Mark Schroeder and DCJS Deputy Commissioner Dean Defruscio, who represented Commissioner Rossana Rosado, provided welcoming remarks. Deputy Commissioner Robert Maccarone cited the program's accomplishments in recognizing more than 80,000 ignition interlock devices having been installed in the motor vehicles of



operators convicted of DWI crimes. Deputy Commissioner Maccarone shared to those in attendance how we evaluate the benefits of harm reduction and the prevention of the loss of life on New York's highways since the inception of the ignition interlock program in 2010.

**(Continued)**

He thanked the probation officers and monitors, prosecutors, police, DMV officials, and IID manufacturers in attendance for their hard work and continued commitment to community safety. Conference guest speakers included Albany Police Department Investigator Richard Chu, Carl Wicklund of TIRF, Mark Giuliano of the Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health, Albany County Probation Department Deputy Director Lori Haggerty, Monroe County Probation Department Supervisor David Rogers, and Nassau County Probation Department Supervisor Natalie Sondike. We look forward to seeing you at next year's Annual Ignition Interlock Conference.

**Probation First Collaborative Case Work Coach Retreat**

On July 11-12, OPCA hosted its inaugural Collaborative Case Work Coach Retreat. CCW coaches enjoyed a virtual workgroup with David Robinson, PhD., Orbis Partners LLC., to discuss NY-specific YASI scoring questions and Mapping A-B-C-D. OPCA Juvenile Probation Operations staff facilitated discussion on topics such as Other Required Screenings in NY's Juvenile Probation, Developing SMART Strength-Based Goals and Actions Steps, Customizing a Service Matrix, and CCW Jeopardy. The retreat included opportunities for coaches to network, share resources and exchange ideas about the design of CCW Coaching among various jurisdictions. It was a time of team building, collaboration, and transformation!

**State Director Addresses Probation Departments**

On July 13, State Director Robert Maccarone addressed the members of the Erie County Probation Department and on Aug. 10, he addressed the members of the Orange County Probation Department. Director Maccarone thanked the probation officers and supervisors for their extraordinary work, recognizing and appreciating just how difficult their work is and the commitment they bring to their jobs each day. Director Maccarone stressed the importance of carrying out the Order and Conditions established by the Court, but also addressed the special role probation officers have in working with individuals over extended periods of time, helping them re-evaluate their thinking and decision-making, and resulting behaviors. Officers were encouraged to never under-estimate the power of their words and the influence they have with individuals on supervision. Director Maccarone was later contacted by a probation officer who relayed that his address about the power of words and encouragement at the right time resonated deeply.

## **Uniform Nationwide Interstate Tracking for Youth (UNITY) Enhancement Release Overview, UNITY Accounts, and On Demand Trainings**

The Interstate Commission for Juveniles (ICJ) Technology Committee announced UNITY Enhancement Releases that occurred in June, July, and August. Staff can visit this [link](#) for the most current information on UNITY Enhancements, an overview of the specific enhancements along with training information. Additionally, juvenile interstate designees and applicable staff can access UNITY on demand trainings on the ICJ Learning Management System (LMS) site [here](#). An account can be created on the LMS by going to the website and clicking "signup" in the upper right-hand corner. If an individual needs to be registered in UNITY, please send the user's information (name, email, phone, and role) to Raymond (Chip) Tashjian at [Raymond.Tashjian@dcjs.ny.gov](mailto:Raymond.Tashjian@dcjs.ny.gov).

### **OPCA Promotion: Manager of the Adult Probation Operations Unit - Frank Cangiano**

Please join us in congratulating Frank Cangiano on his recent promotion to Manager of the Adult Probation Operations Unit. Previously Frank was a Community Corrections Representative 2 in the Vocation/Education, Employment and Re-Entry Unit, where he oversaw employment focused services programs. In addition, Frank served as the program manager for Workforce Development Specialist Training program. Congratulations to Frank on this well-deserved promotion!

### **Interstate Commission for Juveniles (ICJ) – OPCA Interstate Staff Recognition**

The Commission believes in recognizing individuals who do the day-to-day work of the Compact and often surpass expectations to provide assistance to reach a conclusion or solution that best serves public safety. Raymond "Chip" Tashjian of the NY Probation Interstate has been recognized by the Commission for his continued hard work and dedication to ICJ business. Chip's name will be listed in the Commission's FY 23 Annual Report and read aloud during the Commission's Annual Business Meeting. Chip is responsible for processing all incoming and outgoing juvenile probation transfer cases, travel permits, and other correspondence submitted in UNITY to New York State Probation. In addition, Chip closely monitors the submission of home evaluation reports, progress reports and responses to violation reports. He is proactive in his approach to ensure New York compliance in these areas and routinely sends out email correspondence to local probation departments as due date reminders. Chip works with his colleagues throughout the nation to resolve issues in a timely and professional manner and is always available to assist the New York local probation department staff in ICJ related matters. He takes the time to walk local probation department staff through the submission of various events in UNITY and has developed a UNITY/ICJ Rule training which he will present in conjunction with NY Deputy Compact Administrator Shaina Kern later this fall. We recognize and extend our appreciation to Chip and applaud him on this well-deserved recognition.

### NYS DMV Registration and Title Checks

When conducting quarterly NYS DMV Registration and Title checks on individuals required to install ignition interlock devices in vehicles they “own or operate,” staff should first complete a Registration Group Search. The Registration Group Search will provide a history of vehicles that an individual has registered, and the status of each registration. To verify that the individual has sold the vehicle, and not just voluntarily surrendered their plates, you should take the VIN from each vehicle and conduct a search by Vehicle ID. This will allow you to view the current title holder of the vehicle. For your reference, NYS VTL section 128 defines OWNER as follows:

*A person, other than a lien holder, having the property in or title to a vehicle or vessel. The term includes a person entitled to the use and possession of a vehicle or vessel subject to a security interest in another person and also includes any lessee or bailee of a motor vehicle or vessel having the exclusive use thereof, under a lease or otherwise, for a period greater than thirty days.*

### Interactive Journaling – Juvenile Cases

Interactive Journaling is an evidence-based program which assists individuals in moving through the stages of change. The Interactive Journaling – Forward Thinking curriculum is a cognitive-behavioral series that helps juveniles in making positive changes to their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. This curriculum includes the following journals: What Got Me Here?, Individual Change Plan, Responsible Behavior, Handling Difficult Feelings, Relationships and Communication, Victim Awareness, Reentry Planning, Substance Using Behaviors, Family, and Facilitator Guides for each journal.

Click [here](#) if you’re interested in learning more about the Forward Thinking curriculum or any other Interactive Journaling curricula offered by The Change Companies.

### OPCA Convenes Probation Focus Groups on Procedural Justice

OPCA has established an internal workgroup to develop and deliver an in-service training for probation officers on The Essentials of Procedural Justice – a course designed specifically for probation professionals. The goal of the project is to train all probation officers in New York State on the elements of procedural justice and provide promising practices and tools that staff can utilize when engaging with individuals on supervision. In July, the workgroup hosted two focus group sessions with 14 different probation departments. The focus groups were incredibly informative, and a dynamic discussion included the four pillars of procedural justice and how they are already embedded into probation practice and the best ways to deliver a training to departments across the state. Thank you to the departments that participated. More information will be shared soon!

## Twenty Professionals Trained as Workforce Development Specialists

Twenty probation officers, parole officers, community corrections practitioners and re-entry managers graduated from the most recent Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) class and received their certification in the 180-hour challenging training program. This skill-based training constitutes OPCA's WDS training; graduates will join more than 400 certified specialists who are authorized to lead individuals in groups through the 20-hour "Ready, Set, Work!" Program. Specialists are certified to utilize evidenced-based competencies and related skills to assist individuals with legal histories make informed decisions about jobs and career paths based on knowledge of their interests, skills/abilities, and values; educational and occupational opportunities; and the realities of the world of work. Schenectady County Senior Probation Officer Julianna Reilly was the class Valedictorian and Oswego County Senior Probation Officer Stacey Lighthall was the class Salutatorian. Congratulations to all the graduates!



## SAMHSA's GAINS Center – How Being Trauma-Informed Improves Criminal Justice System Responses

The prevalence of trauma among justice-involved individuals is significantly higher than the general population, which calls for a trauma-informed approach. Policy Research Associates, Inc., which operates SAMHSA's GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation, developed a training to increase the knowledge of trauma and identify the skillset for trauma-informed responses by criminal justice professionals, especially community corrections agencies. On Aug. 2, certified trainers and OPCA staff Melinda Vick and Danielle Brendese delivered a virtual four-hour training to over 20 community corrections professionals. The purpose of the training was to increase probation staff understanding of trauma, create awareness on the impact of trauma on behavior and to develop trauma-informed responses and skills. Trauma-informed criminal justice responses seek to avoid re-traumatizing individuals, it increases personal and community safety, reduces recidivism, and promotes the recovery of justice-involved women and men with serious mental illness. Partnerships across systems can also help to link individuals to trauma-informed services and treatment for trauma.

If you any questions regarding this training or any future trauma trainings, please contact Melinda Vick at [Melinda.Vick@dcjs.ny.gov](mailto:Melinda.Vick@dcjs.ny.gov) or Danielle Brendese at [Danielle.Brendese@dcjs.ny.gov](mailto:Danielle.Brendese@dcjs.ny.gov).

## OPCA Delivers Lunch and Learn Webinar on Education/Vocational Resources for Justice Involved Youth

On June 21, more than 60 individuals participated in a Lunch and Learn webinar titled, “Education/Vocational Resources for Justice Involved Youth (14 & up).” Participants were provided a wealth of information from guest speakers and OPCA presenters on the various education and vocational resources available to the youth population in New York State. The webinar recording is available [here](#).

## Interactive Journaling Training for Trainers

OPCA hosted an Interactive Journaling Training for Trainers in Albany from July 12-14. This training, delivered by Scott Covert – The Change Companies, provided an opportunity for probation professionals and other community corrections professionals to become certified trainers in the delivery of the Interactive Journaling “Courage to Change” series. The “Courage to Change” series is an evidence-based cognitive behavioral inter-



vention program that is designed to promote lasting behavioral change in the adult justice-involved populations. Staff that completed the training are now equipped to not only deliver the intervention directly to justice involved individuals but also train staff within their Departments or agencies in facilitating the intervention as well.

If your agency needs Interactive Journaling training, please contact the OPCA Training Unit at [opcatraining@dcjs.ny.gov](mailto:opcatraining@dcjs.ny.gov) for assistance.

## DVSI-R Training for Trainers

OPCA provided an in-person training for trainer opportunity for probation officers to become trainers in the Revised Domestic Violence Screening Instrument (DVSI-R) at the Finger Lakes Law Enforcement Academy in Canandaigua from Aug. 1-2. A total of nine probation officers from nine different probation departments completed the training and became certified DVSI-R Trainers which qualifies them to train other probation officers to utilize the specialized domestic violence screening instrument. The DVSI-R assists probation professionals with supervision decisions, improves accountability of individuals convicted of domestic violence crimes and promotes victim safety. The training was facilitated by accomplished and certified DVSI-R Trainers: Sara Mahoney, former Domestic Violence Probation Officer and current Title IX Coordinator for SUNY Geneseo, Jennifer Curry, Supervisor of the Domestic Violence Unit at Erie County Probation Department and David Lewis, Community Correction Representative, of the Training Unit at OPCA.

Currently, 38 probation departments in New York State have a DVSI-R trainer on staff and nearly 1,000 probation staff from 57 probation departments have received DVSI-R End-User training since September 2018. It is OPCA’s goal to have at least one probation officer trained as a DVSI-R trainer within each department to achieve sustainability. Probation Departments that run training academies should also have at least one trainer.

## DVSI-R Training for Trainers (Continued)

Probation Departments in need of DVSI-R End-User training can contact OPCA's Training Unit at [opcatraining@dcjs.ny.gov](mailto:opcatraining@dcjs.ny.gov). OPCA will also provide additional DVSI-R Training for Trainers in 2023 for those departments in need of a DVSI-R trainer to sustain end users within their departments.



## Westchester County Hosts Basic Course for Peace Officers Graduation

On Aug. 17, 10 trainees from Westchester, Putnam, Orange and Rockland Counties from the most recent Basic Course for Peace Officers academy hosted by Westchester County. This rigorous six-week course had instructors from three of the four counties represented. Congratulations to all the graduates!



## Upcoming Webinars

### Sept. 15th 10:00am to Noon: Career University-Advancing to the Next Level

The purpose of this training webinar is to qualify certified Workforce Development Specialists and assist staff in the facilitation of Career University-Advancing to the Next Level groups. Career University – Advancing to the Next Level is a comprehensive career curriculum for justice involved youth between the ages of 14 and 24 years. This training builds on evidence-based curricula and resources from the NYS DCJS, the NYS Department of Labor, and several local probation departments and community-based organizations with frontline experience working with this population of youth in New York State.

### [Career University Webinar Registration Link](#)

### Sept. 29th 10:00am to Noon: Ready, Set, Work! Technical Assistance Refresher

The purpose of this training webinar is to provide a refresher course for all certified Workforce Development Specialists in the facilitation of “Ready, Set, Work!” groups. This webinar will provide specific technical assistance on how to conduct these groups with fidelity. It is strongly encouraged that all certified Workforce Development Specialists and other staff associated with the delivery of this intervention attend this webinar. If you are fully certified WD Specialists, and have never led a group on “Ready, Set, Work!”, now is your opportunity to refresh your skills and fully utilize the certification credential you have earned.

### [Ready, Set, Work! Refresher and Technical Assistance Registration Link](#)

Please contact Monica Luciani, Community Correction Representative 1, at [Monica.Luciani@dcjs.ny.gov](mailto:Monica.Luciani@dcjs.ny.gov) if you have any questions about either webinar.

## **NYS DCJS 2023 Public Safety Symposium: Sept. 27-29 in Albany**

DCJS will bring together criminal justice professionals from around New York State, and beyond, for the 2023 Public Safety Symposium at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center in Albany, N.Y., from Sept. 26 through 28. Participants will share innovative ideas, evidence-based violence reduction practices, as well as updates on police reform and reinvention collaborations. The Symposium is open to all members of the criminal justice community in New York State. Currently, there are about 70 presentations on an extensive array of important public safety topics.

Keynote speakers for the Symposium will include:

- Nancy LaVigne, PhD, Director, National Institute of Justice
- Robin Engel, PhD, Senior Vice President, National Policing Institute

If you're interested in attending the Symposium, please register [here](#).



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## Newsletter Briefs - Retirements

### *Michelle Olszowy, Erie County*

Michelle Olszowy, Commissioner of the Erie County Probation Department officially retired after more than 25 years of public service to Erie County all of which have been with the probation department. Her career started when she was hired as a Probation Assistant in 1998. During her career, she supported all things related to training, professional development and mentoring both for OPCA and Erie County. In 2017, she led the Department in the use of the DVSI-R instrument and over the last few years continued working to development the departments Comprehensive Opioid Abuse program, implemented a specialized probation and peer navigator program, and served as a member of the GIVE and DCJS RISE committees. We wish Commissioner Olszowy well in her retirement! Congratulations on a very successful career!

### *Lucille Sitterly, Montgomery County*

Lucille Sitterly, Director of the Montgomery County Probation Department officially retired after 54 years of public service to Montgomery County – the majority of which have been spent with the probation department. Director Sitterly also was involved with the NYS Council of Probation Administrators and the PARC Committee. We wish Director Sitterly well in her retirement! Congratulations on a very successful career!

### *John Cicchetti, Niagara County*

This summer, John Cicchetti, Director of the Niagara County Probation Department officially retired after 31 years of public service to Niagara County, 29 years of which have been in the field of Probation. During his administration, he led the advancement of many initiatives including but not limited to expanding the Employment Focused Services program, GIVE, expanding the TASC and Pre-Trial Services programs and implemented the Justice Mental Health Collaboration Program in Niagara County. We wish Director Cicchetti well in his retirement! Congratulations on a very successful career!