

OVS Victim Service Academy Trainings

Course Catalog 2021 – 2022



Office of
Victim Services



About OVS Victim Service Academy Trainings

To help address the underlying needs of crime victims, the **New York State Office of Victim Services (OVS)** and the **Institute for Disaster Mental Health at SUNY New Paltz (IDMH)** have partnered to offer Victim Service Academy Trainings to victim service professionals from OVS-funded organizations.

Each 8-week academy cohort will focus on providing victim advocates with basic principles of trauma-informed care, including how to support others and themselves. Course topics will also focus on adapting to the needs of different victim populations, and on providing culturally competent care that takes into consideration the worldviews and lived experiences of those being served.

Participants will attend eight 90-minute virtual sessions, and a one-day culmination event (in-person or virtual, depending on current New York State COVID-19 guidelines). All participants will attend six sessions on trauma-informed helping skills, self-care, and cultural competence, and will select two elective sessions focused on working with specific populations to attend. All sessions are interactive and require participants to have a working camera and microphone.

Target Audience

Victim Service Academy Trainings are for entry-level victim advocates. Due to the high level of interactivity for all sessions, academy trainings will be limited to 25 participants per 8-week session.

Academy Schedule

Spring 2021	Registration Opens March 2021
Fall 2021	Registration Opens August 2021
Spring 2022	Registration Opens March 2022
Summer 2022	Registration Opens April 2022
Fall 2022	Registration Opens August 2022

Course Catalog

All Victim Service Academy Training participants will be required to attend 8 live training modules, hosted via ZOOM. The modules consist of 6 required topics, and 2 electives. A virtual capstone event will be held after Module 8 to build on the content covered during the modules, and to provide opportunities for networking and self-care.

For more information, please visit ovs.ny.gov/academy.

Please note that the order of course topics may change between academy cohorts. For the most up to date information, including upcoming cohort schedules, please visit ovs.ny.gov/academy.

Module 1: Introductions and Getting Started: Welcome to the OVS Academy!

[Amy Nitza, Ph.D, LMHC](#) and [Rebecca Rodriguez, M.S.](#)

This first session will introduce and kick-off the academy training series. In this meeting, participants will:

1. Understand requirements of the training series
2. Practice using web-based tools that will be used throughout the series
3. Introduce themselves and their goals to their cohort

Module 2: Understanding Reactions to Stress and Trauma

[Karla Vermeulen, Ph.D](#)

Survivors of traumatic events and extreme stressors experience a range of reactions that vary according to a number of factors and impact their functioning in different ways. At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify and describe common reactions to stress and trauma
2. Understand the impact of acute, chronic, and intergenerational trauma on survivors
3. Consider the impact of trauma on survivor's experiences with services and service providers

Module 3: Applying Core Helping Skills

[Amy Nitza, Ph.D, LMHC](#)

Psychological First Aid is a set of tools and practices that support and promote the natural recovery system of people who have been impacted by a traumatic event. In this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify and describe interpersonal and helping skills for effectively interacting with and supporting trauma survivors
2. Practice the skills of Psychological First Aid

Module 4: Providing Trauma-Informed Care

[Amy Nitza, Ph.D, LMHC](#)

The trauma histories of survivors influence the ways they interact in the world, including how they perceive and relate to services and service providers. At the same time, service providers can do a great deal to create environments that promote healing and recovery. At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Define trauma-informed care
2. Identify the ways in which trauma exposure can shape how clients react to services and relate to services providers
3. Describe principles and strategies for creating trauma-informed environments that promote healing and avoid retraumatization

Module 5: Culture & Crisis: Integrating Social Justice & Victim Services

[Aziza Belcher Platt, Ph.D](#)

Victim services providers encounter clients and community members in traumatic circumstances and it is imperative to avoid compounding the originating trauma with race- based trauma. As such, this workshop will help victim services providers develop and strengthen their understanding of racial-cultural factors as well as the impact of racism, and current and intergenerational race-based trauma on themselves and the individuals they support. In doing so, attendees will gain skills to consider a multitude of racial-cultural factors; consider their own and their clients'/consumers' racial-cultural context and experiences; and explore how identities impact interactions. The presenter will share strategies to facilitate intercultural communication, avoid microaggressions, and address intercultural conflict and repair the working relationship in the event of microaggressions or cross-cultural discord.

Participants will be able to:

1. Explore domains of race, culture, power, and privilege; impact of racism and race-based trauma; and utility and significance of addressing these factors in all engagements
2. Explain barriers to addressing aspects of social identity and how to address and navigate said barriers
3. Apply and practice strategies for assessing self and client identities and intersections and for facilitating intercultural conversations and resolving intercultural conflict (e.g. microaggressions)

Module 6: Promoting Personal Resilience: Caring for Self while Caring for Others

[Amy Nitza, Ph.D, LMHC](#)

Advocates and others working with victims and survivors are susceptible to several professional risks, including burn-out, compassion fatigue and vicarious traumatization. In this session, participants will be able to:

1. Recognize the relationship between care of clients and self-care
2. Identify symptoms of burn-out, compassion fatigue, and various traumatization
3. Develop strategies and skills for preventing and combatting burn-out, compassion fatigue, and vicarious traumatization.

4. Discuss and share strategies for maintaining resilience and staying connected to the mission of the organization during times of stress

Modules 7 & 8: Elective Sessions

Various Instructors

Participants will select 2 of these sessions to further their knowledge and understanding of how to best support the diverse populations they are working with.

Elective 1: Supporting Immigrants and Refugees: Trauma, Resilience, and Recovery

[*Eric C. Chen, Ph.D.*](#), [*Gabriela Muñoz De Zubiría, MEd*](#) and [*HangYi Chen, LCSW, MSW*](#)

This presentation aims to highlight the diverse experiences, needs, and challenges of immigrants and refugees recovering from trauma. The interrelated biological- psychological- social aspects of trauma across various stages of immigration and resettlement will be reviewed. Implications for children and families will also be discussed. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will highlight personal, cultural, and contextual factors that affect this marginalized population's stress and resilience in response to trauma. Recommendations for promoting resilience will be offered in light of potential constraints to service provision and in accordance with culturally-responsive and trauma-informed best practices.

Participants will be able to:

1. Address the convergent and divergent needs and challenges confronting immigrants and refugees recovering from trauma.
2. Develop strategies to support immigrant and refugee wellness in accordance with culturally-responsive and trauma-informed best practices.

Elective 2: Supporting LGBTQI+ Populations

[*Kris Goodrich, Ph.D.*](#)

This workshop will introduce participants to harm reduction and trauma informed care within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning and intersex communities (LGBTQI+). Participants will first learn about the communities, and then explore the different risks factors and opportunities for resilience across these communities. Through use of case studies and small group discussion, participants will explore how they might be able to better identify, address, and intervene with persons in this community in a culturally appropriate way.

Participant engagement is highly recommended, so that we can collectively translate how we can better support this community in your current agency or setting.

Participants will:

1. Be able to describe the different identities and statuses that make up the LGBTQI+ communities.

2. Identify at least one harm reduction and one crisis intervention strategy that can be implemented within these communities in their agency.
3. Identify, evaluate and describe culturally appropriate ways to intervene with LGBTQI+ persons facing trauma or harm in their specific setting context.

Elective 3: Disability and Crime: What Victims Assistance Personnel Need to Know

[*Linda Shaw, Ph.D.*](#)

Victims of crimes who also are disabled have needs that parallel those of crime victims in general, but also have some unique needs and circumstances that need to be understood and addressed by those who wish to assist. This training will acquaint the participant with the characteristics of individuals with disabilities who become crime victims, such as the types of disability that result in the highest risk, and will also explore some of the differences between victimization of people with and without disabilities, including crime rates, types of crime, reporting, victim-offender relationship and others. Various considerations for working with individuals who have a pre-existing disability versus those who sustain their disability as a result of violent crime will be addressed.

Participants will:

1. Understand the significance of reasonable accommodations in working with crime victims with disabilities.
2. Review helpful disability etiquette and language, including disability type-specific considerations.
3. Receive resources helpful in working with individuals with disabilities

Elective 4: Working with Children and Adolescents

[*Craig Haen, Ph.D.*](#)

This 90-min training module is designed to enhance attendees' knowledge of the impact of trauma exposure on the bodies, brains, and emotions of children and adolescents. The presenter will engage the audience in understanding these young people from the inside out, including considering how the stories of what kids have been through, which are often hard to express in words, get told instead through behavior, play, and relationship patterns. In addition to learning about the impact of trauma, participants will be able to identify characteristics of trauma-responsive relationships and environments—which hold the greatest promise for helping young people to transcend their circumstances in order to build a hopeful future.

Participants will:

1. Identify three ways that trauma impacts young people.
2. Cite two reasons why the promotion of self-regulatory capacities is essential to positive outcomes.
3. Articulate two commitments for their professional work that will help them build more effective relationships with children and adolescents who have been traumatized.

Capstone Academy Event:

During this in-person or virtual event (depending on New York State COVID-19 safety guidelines at the time of enrollment), facilitators will expand on important topics addressed in the on-line modules and attendees will have the opportunity to network and consult with peers from their on-line training cohort to discuss challenges and share ideas. The event will culminate with self-care activities that will allow attendees to focus on their own wellbeing.

Additional details regarding the Capstone Academy Event will be shared with each attendee at the time of registration.

Course Instructors



Amy Nitza, Ph.D, LMHC

Dr. Amy Nitza is the Director of the Institute for Disaster Mental Health at SUNY New Paltz. She is a psychologist who specializes in providing mental health training in academic and non-academic settings both nationally and internationally, with an emphasis on disaster mental health and trauma recovery. As a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Botswana, she trained mental health and school counselors and studied the use of group counseling interventions in HIV/AIDS prevention among adolescents.

She has collaborated with the University of Notre Dame in Haiti to develop trauma-related interventions for children in domestic servitude, and to provide training for teachers in dealing with traumatized children in the classroom. She is also currently collaborating with UNICEF USA to develop and implement a program of mental health support for children impacted by Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico. Amy is the author and editor of numerous publications, including the recent book *Disaster Mental Health Case Studies: Lessons Learned from Counseling in Chaos*.

She is a Fellow of the Association for Specialists in Group Work and serves on the Executive Board of the Society for Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy (Division 49) of the American Psychological Association. She holds a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Indiana University. She formerly served as an Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Professional Studies at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne.



Karla Vermeulen, Ph.D

Karla Vermeulen, Ph.D., is the Deputy Director of the Institute for Disaster Mental Health and an Associate Professor of Psychology at SUNY New Paltz, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in disaster mental health, grief counseling, and developmental psychology. In addition to teaching and research, she has coordinated the development and production of training curricula for the New York State Department of Health and Office of Mental Health, the American Red Cross, the United Nations, and other organizations. She is co-author of *Disaster Mental Health Interventions: Core Principles and Practices* (2017) and co-editor of

Disaster Mental Health Case Studies: Lessons Learned from Counseling in Chaos (2019), both published by Routledge. She is currently completing a book on the developmental impact of disasters and other stressors on today's emerging adults.



Rebecca Rodriguez, M.S.

Rebecca Rodriguez, M.S., is the Program and Operations Manager for the Institute for Disaster Mental Health (IDMH). She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology with a minor in Disaster Studies and a Master's Degree in Mental Health Counseling from State University of New York at New Paltz. Rebecca is a certified American Red Cross Volunteer and has been with IDMH since 2011, serving as coordinator and principle investigator on numerous grants and activities, including projects for USAID West Bank/Gaza, United Nations Emergency Support Team, NYS Office of Mental Health, Department of Health, Office of Victim Services, and the

Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services.



Aziza Belcher Platt, Ph.D.

Dr. Aziza A. B. Platt is a licensed psychologist providing culturally-responsive individual and group psychotherapy, family therapy, and psychological assessment. She treats various concerns and specializes in racial-cultural issues, trauma, and grief. She was inspired to get into mental health to contribute to efforts to make therapy more acceptable, accessible, and affordable particularly for marginalized communities. Social justice and liberation are an indelible part of her work. For patients, she aims to eliminate barriers, structural and otherwise, to seeking and

receiving quality and culturally competent mental health care, especially for underrepresented and under-served communities. As a practitioner, she strives to help the field and practitioners become increasingly more culturally aware and responsive.

As a scientist, she focuses on health disparities and evidence-based research to inform culturally responsive clinical practice. She hopes to integrate the skills from her previous career as a software developer into her psychological endeavors.



Eric C. Chen, Ph.D

Eric C. Chen, PhD, is a Professor of Counseling and Counseling Psychology at Fordham University. Born and raised in Taiwan, he was a high school teacher before coming to the U.S. to pursue his graduate degrees. He received his PhD in Counseling Psychology from Arizona State University. Since joining Fordham in 1995, he has served as department chair and as training director of the Counseling Psychology PhD program. He currently coordinates the master's Mental Health Counseling program. A Fellow of the American Psychological

Association (APA), Dr. Chen serves on the Board of Directors of the [Society of Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy](#) (Division 49 of the APA) where he also chairs the Diversity Committee. At the APA's 2020 annual meeting, he was honored with the Presidential Award from APA's Division 49. His professional and research interests center on group counseling and stigmatized identities of marginalized individuals, and, in particular, undocumented immigrant students and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals.



Gabriela Muñoz De Zubiría, MEd

Gabriela Muñoz De Zubiría is a Counseling Psychology doctoral student at Fordham University. She was born in Santiago, Chile to Colombian and Peruvian parents and lived in Caracas, Venezuela prior to moving to the United States in December 2001. Before joining Fordham in 2018, she completed her BS in Psychology at Florida State University. Gabi's identity as a Hispanic immigrant has strongly influenced her educational, research, and career trajectories. Specifically, her research interests include the help seeking attitudes of undocumented immigrants, the dynamics of mixed-status families, and counseling resources that help combat the negative psychological impacts of an unauthorized status. Her current research apprenticeship project aims to examine attitudes about status disclosure for members of Latinx mixed-status families. She is completing her externship at the Counseling Services Center at John Jay College of Criminal Justice providing individual short-term psychotherapy to college students. Her main professional goal is to serve Hispanic college students as a staff psychologist at a university counseling center.



HangYi Chen, LCSW, MSW

HangYi Chen is a PhD candidate in Counseling Psychology at Fordham University. Both her research and clinical interests are primarily in the areas of immigrant health and trauma. She has co-authored journal articles and poster presentations on topics such as working with interpreters in group psychotherapy with forced migrants and examining the phenomenon of concealable stigmatized identities in the refugee population. She is a psychology extern at Manhattan Veterans Affairs, receiving specialized training in various evidence-based treatment modalities for veteran survivors of combat- and military-related trauma. Prior to attending Fordham, HangYi received her Master's in Social Work from New York University. She worked as a licensed clinical social worker at the Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture, providing services to immigrants who are survivors of torture, war trauma, and other forms of human rights abuses. Her other clinical experiences include working with patients diagnosed with severe mental illnesses in both outpatient and inpatient settings, and with victims of domestic violence, human trafficking and sexual assault in underserved communities.



Kris Goodrich, Ph.D.

Kristopher Goodrich is a Professor of Counselor Education, and currently serves as Chair of the Department of Individual, Family and Community Education, as well as Interim Chair of the Department of Teacher Education, Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of New Mexico. He has served as national president of both the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, and the Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling (now called SAIGE). He has also served as President of the New Mexico Counseling Association and is the current editor of the Journal for Specialists in Group Work.



Linda Shaw, Ph.D.

Linda R. Shaw is a Professor and Director of the Doctoral Program in Counselor Education and Supervision at the University of Arizona. Her clinical experience includes counseling and administrative roles in spinal cord injury, brain injury and psychiatric rehabilitation, as well as vocational rehabilitation. She is a past-president of the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA) and of the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE). She served as Vice-Chair of the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) and as chair of the Ethics Committee for CRCC. Dr. Shaw was a member of the American Counseling Association (ACA) Ethics Revision Task Force (2014 revision) and also served as Chair of the CRCC Code of Ethics Revision Task Force (2017 revision). She served as a co-chair of the Disability-Related Competencies Task Force and currently serves on an Ethical Guidelines Task Force for the Association of Specialists in Group Work. Dr. Shaw is the co-author or co-editor of 3 books and has published and presented widely on disability human rights, disability advocacy and leadership, ethics, group counseling and professional issues in rehabilitation counseling.



Craig Haen, Ph.D., RDT, CGP, LCAT, FAGPA

Dr. Craig Haen has a private practice working with children, adolescents, adults and families in White Plains, NY. He serves as faculty in the department of applied psychology at New York University and the expressive therapies doctoral program at Lesley University, teaching courses in both clinical practice and research. Dr. Haen is a Fellow of the American Group Psychotherapy Association, where he co-chairs the Community Outreach Task Force, a group that responds to trauma events in diverse communities and creates the organization's public statements on human rights issues. He co-founded and serves as Program Director for the Kint Institute, a post-Masters clinical training in the arts and trauma treatment in New York City. His most recent book is Creative Arts-Based Group therapy with Adolescents, with Nancy Boyd Web.