

Presenter Biographies

Mary Mazzio, JD, (Keynote Speaker), an award-winning documentary film director, Olympic athlete, and former law firm partner, is Founder & CEO of 50 Eggs, Inc., an independent film production company dedicated to making socially impactful films. Mary wrote, directed and produced the highly-acclaimed films Underwater Dreams, TEN9EIGHT, The Apple Pushers, A Hero for Daisy, Contrarian, Apple Pie, and Lemonade Stories. Her newest documentary film, I AM JANE DOE, narrated by Academy Award nominee, Jessica Chastain has been called “a gripping legal thriller” (Esquire) and “a powerful call to action” (The Los Angeles Times) and chronicles the epic legal battle that several American mothers are waging on behalf of their middle school daughters, victims of sex trafficking on the classified advertising website Backpage.com. The companion film, and animated short called I AM LITTLE RED, premiered at an event hosted by the US Department of Education and the US Department of Health and Human Services. Ms. Mazzio is graduate of Mount Holyoke College and Georgetown Law School.

Jessica Soto, JD, (Keynote Speaker), served on the Ropes & Gray legal team representing human trafficking survivors in Massachusetts and is featured in the film *I AM JANE DOE*. Ms. Soto joined the Ropes & Gray litigation department as an associate in 2012 and is a member of the firm’s government enforcement practice group. Jessica’s *pro bono* practice includes representing indigent defendants in federal criminal cases through the firm’s participation in the Criminal Justice Act program and representing human trafficking survivors in federal civil cases. Ms. Soto is a graduate of Yale University and Columbia University School of Law.

Denise Edwards, MPP, (Plenary Speaker), is director of government affairs for National Children’s Alliance (NCA). As director of government affairs, Denise develops, coordinates and leads all federal legislative and political strategies for NCA and its members, including strategies to expand the use and awareness of CACs in legislation and agency policy. Prior to her tenure with NCA, Denise served as manager of government affairs for Dunkin’ Brands, Inc., representing the company and its more than 16,000 small business franchises before Congress and State/Local governments. Denise began her Washington career working in the U.S. House of Representatives serving on the staff of several members, including as deputy chief of staff and legislative director for Rep. Bud Cramer. Denise is a graduate of Baylor University, with a master’s in Public Policy Administration and a bachelor’s in Business Administration with a focus on financial planning.

Sue Ascione, MS, joined NRCAC as a Training Specialist in 2016 and has served over 30 years in the field of family violence as a direct service provider to victims of child abuse and domestic violence and in leadership positions at child-serving nonprofit organizations in Northwestern Pennsylvania. Ms. Ascione served 16 years as the Executive Director of the Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) in Lawrence County, PA. She has been a mentor, trainer, and consultant to many emerging and developing CACs and multidisciplinary teams to identify challenges, barriers, and organizational development needs to plan for changes necessary for quality improvement. With the trauma that CAC teams and employees see every day, she takes great interest in assisting children’s advocacy centers and their partners to build resiliency infrastructure into their organizations. **Workshop: Vicarious Trauma and Building Resiliency in Child Abuse Organizations.**

Stephanie Block, Ph.D, is Assistant Professor in Applied Developmental Psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. She teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in Child Maltreatment and Psychology and Law. She received her Ph.D. from the University of California, Davis, and was a NICHD postdoctoral fellow with the Center for Developmental Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. During her postdoc she was also affiliated with the Injury Prevention Research Center where

she received public health training and conducted research in the primary prevention of child maltreatment. Dr. Block serves on the Executive Committee for the American Psychological Association's Division on Child and Family Policy's Section on Child Maltreatment. Her research has broadly focused on children in the legal system, the effects of trauma on children's wellbeing, and memory for emotional events. Stephanie has consulted with several district attorney offices and the Innocence Project on issues related to children's eyewitness testimony and their experiences in court. She has testified as an expert witness for the State about delayed disclosure and children's memory for trauma in child sex abuse cases.

Workshop: *Research Collaboration on the Prosecution of Child Sexual Abuse: Challenges and Outcomes.*

Christopher Kelly, JD, is the Director of the Digital Evidence Laboratory for the Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General where he leads a team of analysts conducting digital forensic examinations of technical evidence in the course of criminal investigations. He previously served as Managing Attorney of the Cyber Crime Division there where he prosecuted cyber offenses. Prior to working at the Attorney General's Office, Mr. Kelly worked for the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, where he built and ran the current Computer Forensic Laboratory; there he prosecuted cybercrime cases and worked on the digital aspects of criminal investigations. Mr. Kelly serves as an instructor and performs curriculum development for the United States Secret service and is an adjunct professor of digital forensics at Bunker Hill Community College. Mr. Kelly holds several digital forensic certifications, is a regular speaker on topics related to digital forensics and cybercrime investigations, and belongs to several professional associations, including the Accreditation Task Group for the National institute of Standards in Technology's Digital Evidence. He also sits on the editorial board for the Journal of Digital Investigation. Mr. Kelly earned bachelor's degrees in psychology and political science from Boston University, and his law degree from Suffolk University Law School. **Workshop:** *Technology, Child Pornography, and Trafficking.*

Julie Kenniston, MSW, LISW, is a Program Manager for the National Criminal Justice Training Program of Fox Valley Technical College. She presents nationally and internationally on forensic interviewing. She is a faculty member for the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC) and Ohio Attorney General's Finding Words forensic interview courses. Ms. Kenniston coordinated the Forensic Training Institute for The Childhood Trust and now manages the updated Child Forensic Interviewing program. She co-chairs the APSAC forensic interviewer committee and chairs the committee updating guidelines regarding the use of interview aids in forensic interviews. She has conducted over 3,000 forensic interviews and currently conducts interviews for the Southwest Ohio ICAC Task Force. Ms. Kenniston co- authored Handbook on Questioning Children: A Linguistic Perspective, 3rd edition with Anne Graffam Walker, Ph.D. **Workshop:** *Following the Evidence in the Commercial Sexual Exploitation Forensic Interview.*

Kelly Kinnish, Ph.D, is the Director of Clinical Services at the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy in Atlanta, GA, where she oversees the Center's clinical service programs to sexually abused and traumatized children and children engaging in problematic sexual behaviors. She is also the Director of Project Intersect, a SAMHSA-funded program of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network that targets the mental health needs of Commercially Sexually Exploited Children. Project Intersect supports clinical services to CSEC-identified clients at the Georgia Center and also supports the training of a network of providers throughout the state in trauma-focused evidence-based practices. Dr. Kinnish received her PhD in Psychology (Clinical-Child), from the University of Utah and completed her internship and post-doctoral training at the University of Miami (FL). She has worked with maltreated and at-risk children and families for over 20 years in clinical, research, and administrative capacities. **Workshops:** *Doing What Works: Overview of Evidence-based Treatments and Innovations in Children's Advocacy Centers and Mental Health Services Response to the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: Trauma-focused, Evidence-based Treatment and Provider Training.*

Michelle Levasseur, MS, is the technical leader of the Criminalistics Unit of the Massachusetts State Police Crime Laboratory, where she supervises laboratory staff responsible for the identification, testing and collection of biological fluids, trace materials and gunshot residues in the laboratory. Currently, there are four laboratories within the crime laboratory system that perform these functions. She is a graduate of National University and University of Massachusetts Boston. **Workshop: Global Approach to Pediatric Sexual Assault Evidence Collection and Analysis.**

Michele Mullen, MSW, LCSW, is a Training Specialist with Northeast Regional Children's Advocacy Center (NRCAC), where she provides training and technical assistance to developing and established CACs and MDTs in Maine, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Ms. Mullen joined NRCAC in September 2014 after 17 years with the Norfolk District Attorney's Office/Children's Advocacy Center in Massachusetts. Michele began as a Victim Advocate before moving to the CAC Director role and was dedicated to the development of a fully accredited children's advocacy center in 2010. In her role at NRCAC, Ms. Mullen also conducts regional training on Victim Advocacy, Vicarious Trauma/Building Resiliency in Child Abuse Organizations, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, and Multidisciplinary team development. **Workshop: Vicarious Trauma and Building Resiliency in Child Abuse Organizations.**

Rachel Niemiec, RN, MSN, FNP-BC, is currently Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner providing care within the Plymouth and Norfolk County Children's Advocacy Centers as well as an Adult/Adolescent SANE for Central Massachusetts. She has been with the Massachusetts SANE program for the last 4 years. She received her Masters' Degree in Nursing with dual certification as a Board-Certified Family Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator and has a Bachelors' Degree in Criminal Justice. With over 13 years of experience working within the field of trauma, she began her career as a community-based advocate for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. **Workshop: Global Approach to Pediatric Sexual Assault Evidence Collection and Analysis.**

Hema Sarang-Sieminski, JD, is a Senior Attorney at the Victim Rights Law Center in Boston, MA. Her areas of experience include representing survivors of sexual assault, with a focus on immigrant and LGBTQ communities and well as training and mentoring attorneys representing sexual assault survivors to challenge institutional bias and oppression in our legal work. Hema has worked with survivors of partner abuse and sexual violence for fifteen years in a variety of capacities including private immigration practice, community engagement in LGBTQ communities with The Network/La Red, and as a Staff Attorney at the Immigration Unit of Greater Boston Legal Services. She has presented locally and nationally on immigration options for immigrant and LGBTQ survivors to community groups, attorneys and service providers. Hema has dedicated her career to creating opportunities for wholeness and dignity for survivors and is committed to approaches to ending sexual violence that address and challenge the intersections of various forms of oppression including racism, sexism, homo-/bi-/trans- phobia, anti-immigrant sentiment and ableism. Hema is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and the MA LGBTQ Bar Association. Hema received her BA from the University of Pennsylvania and her JD in 2005 from Northeastern University School of Law. **Workshop: Supporting Immigrant Survivors of Sexual Assault in Uncertain Times.**

Dr. Sasha Svendsen, MD, is a board-certified Child Abuse Pediatrician at the University of Massachusetts Memorial Children's Medical Center. Dr. Svendsen attended medical school at Penn State. She completed her residency in pediatric medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester and stayed for an additional year as pediatric chief resident. She then went out West to Children's Hospital Colorado and the Kempe Center where she completed her Child Abuse Pediatrics subspecialty fellowship training. She returned to the UMass Children's Medical Center in September 2017 as a board-certified

Child Abuse Pediatrician and member of the UMass Medical School faculty. **Workshop: When to Make a Mountain Out of a Mole Hill: The Significance of Sentinel Injuries.**

Linda M. Williams, Ph.D, is a senior research scientist and co-director of the Justice and Gender-Based Violence Research Initiative at the Wellesley Centers for Women. The focus of her current work is on justice system response to sexual violence, commercial sexual exploitation of women and children, human trafficking, intimate partner violence, and child maltreatment. Dr. Williams returned to WCW after serving as professor of Criminal Justice and Criminology at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell (2005-2015) and where she is now Professor Emerita. Author of many books and scholarly publications, Dr. Williams has lectured internationally on sexual violence, commercial sexual exploitation, trauma & memory, and researcher-practitioner collaborations. She served as an invited expert for the first international expert meeting on domestic sex trafficking under the auspices of the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children in The Hague, Netherlands and also on the National Research Council Panel on Violence Against Women. **Workshop: Research Collaboration on the Prosecution of Child Sexual Abuse: Challenges and Outcomes.**