



NH Foster & Adoptive  
Parent Association



CWEP  
Child Welfare  
Education Partnership  
at Granite State College



NH FAPA Conference 2018

# Advocating Effectively

*(for Yourself and Your Children)*

Plymouth State University | Saturday, October 13, 2018

## Introduction

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This year's conference is dedicated to the memory of Eileen Mullen, who passed away in August.



### Eileen Mullen

Eileen was an enthusiastic and passionate advocate for children throughout her 38-year career with DHHS. She began as a CPSW, where she quickly realized the impact she could have on

children and families and focused her career around child advocacy. Eileen spent the past 20 years as Administrator of the Bureau of Community and Family Support. In this role, she oversaw foster care and adoption services and helped establish post-adoption and adoption search services to ensure children leaving the state system would always have access to ongoing support.

Eileen helped create New Hampshire Chronicle's Home at Last segment featuring adoption-eligible children, in partnership with DCYF and WMUR. She was awarded the first 9 Loves Award from WMUR this past March in recognition of her life's work.

Four years ago, Eileen was instrumental in obtaining the first grant from Wendy's Corporation fast-food franchises in support of NHFAPA. Those annual donations continue to support the association and children in care today.

More recently, Eileen worked with the Adoptive Families for Children Foundation (AFFC), as well as her colleagues at DCYF, to help create the Granite State Adoption Resource Exchange (GSARE). Set to be unveiled in the fall of 2018, the GSARE will be a NH-centric clearinghouse providing information about NH children who are free for adoption and other resources to prospective adoptive parents.

In recognition of her tireless work on behalf of adoptees, Eileen was recognized as Senator Jeanne Shaheen's 2018 Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) Angels in Adoption honoree. This national award is in recognition of Eileen's extraordinary contribution on behalf of children in need of families.

Eileen was an advocate for NH infants and their families as well. She served on numerous committees and boards in service to developing standards, policies, and practices in support of children. In February, Eileen was awarded the NH Association for Infant Mental Health Annual Award in recognition of her many contributions to that field.

Eileen will be remembered by her family and friends as a courageous, warm, compassionate, loving, and giving person. Her light will continue to shine in the hearts of all who knew her.

# Conference Schedule

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**Time:**

**Description:**

8:00 a.m.- 9:00 a.m.

Registration/Breakfast/Socializing

9:00 a.m.- 9:20 a.m.

Welcome/Opening Remarks

9:20 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

Advocating in the Child Welfare System – Sue Meagher

**Workshop A** (Choose One)

10:45 a.m.-11:45 a.m.

A1: Advocating in the Courts – Anna Elbroch and Sue Meagher

10:45 a.m.-11:45 a.m.

A2: Advocating in the Schools – Sarah Fox and Michelle E. Wangerin

10:45 a.m.-11:45 a.m.

A3: Legislative Advocacy – Scott Maltzie

11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

Lunch

**Workshop B** (Choose One)

12:45 p.m.-1:45 p.m.

B1: Advocating in the Courts – Anna Elbroch and Sue Meagher

12:45 p.m.-1:45 p.m.

B2: Advocating in the Schools – Sarah Fox

12:45 p.m.-1:45 p.m.

B3: Legislative Advocacy – Scott Maltzie

2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Panel Discussion featuring DCYF Director Joe Ribsam, Child Advocate Moira O’Neill, Honorable Susan W. Ashley; Presiding Judge, Rochester District Court, and other distinguished guests. (Focus: Advocating within the Child Welfare System)

3:30 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Ice Cream/Raffles/Closing Remarks

[Register Here](#)



## Presenter Bios

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### Advocating in the Child Welfare System, Advocating in the Courts –

#### Susan Meagher

Susan Meagher earned her Master's in Human Services from Springfield College. She worked for 10 years in residential treatment facilities with abused and neglected children and was the director of a group home for adolescent girls in Derry, NH for eight years. Sue then worked for CASA of NH for 20 years as a program director. For the past 15 years, she has taught courses for foster and adoptive parents through Granite State College, and worked for 10 years at the Nashua Youth Council as an intake worker in their youth Court Diversion Program. She was also the Recruitment & Training Coordinator for the CASA Project.

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### Advocating in the Courts –

#### Anna Elbroch

Anna has spent her career as a passionate advocate for children as a CASA, GAL, public defender, and a private practice attorney specializing in CHINS, abuse, and delinquency proceedings. She currently teaches juvenile justice at Southern New Hampshire University and is the Legal Training Coordinator at the Child Welfare Education Partnership, instructing juvenile probation officers and child protective workers on the legal aspects of their work. Anna also sits on the NH Board of Psychologists and works for the Seacoast Diversion Program providing first-time youth offenders a chance to avoid court. In Anna's spare time, she can be seen watching her daughters in their musical theatre performances and soccer games on the Seacoast.

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### Advocating in the Schools –

#### Sarah Fox

Sarah Fox grew up in the Lakes Region and still calls the area home. She has a multitude of experience working with and advocating on behalf of children as a classroom teacher, childcare director, CASA volunteer, attorney, and a foster parent to three children. Sarah has been a DCYF Education Consultant and a training specialist and coordinator for the Court Improvement Project. In August, she transitioned into a local school district where she continues to work on behalf of children and families.

#### Michelle E. Wangerin

Michelle is the Youth Law Project director at NH Legal Assistance (NH LA) in Portsmouth, providing civil legal representation to children including representation of children and families at school disciplinary and special education proceedings to address unmet needs that contribute to the youth's involvement in the juvenile justice system. Michelle was previously a staff attorney with NH Public Defender, providing representation to juveniles at all levels of criminal and delinquency proceedings. In addition to legal representation, Michelle focuses on public policy advocacy at the state level to realign New Hampshire's juvenile systems with best state and national practices. Michelle is a member of the NH Bar Association's Children's Law Section and the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates.

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### Legislative Advocacy –

#### Scott Maltzie

Scott is an assistant professor of Business at Lakes Region Community College and an online professor of Business at Liberty University. He earned his Ph.D. in Business Administration from Northcentral University.

Scott has worked under Governors Shaheen, Merrill, Gregg, and (John) Sununu in the Governor's Office of Energy and Community Services. He was a committee chairman for Senator Marco Rubio's presidential campaign, and is currently Chairman of the Merrimack County Republican Committee.

Scott and wife Beth have been foster parents for nearly eight years. Together, they run the Central NH Foster and Adoptive Parent Support Group.

## Workshop Descriptions

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### Advocating in the Child Welfare System –

#### Susan Meagher

In this workshop, Sue will draw on her many years of experience working within the child welfare system, as well as many years teaching others to navigate that system. The focus will be on positive communication skills, both written and verbal, building professional relationships, and developing an understanding of both the possibilities and limitations of the child welfare system. Strategies will be presented to assist participants in successfully advocating for the children in their care.

### Advocating in the Courts –

#### Anna Elbroch and Sue Meagher

This workshop explores different methods of court advocacy - how and when to address the courts on behalf of foster and adoptive children. There will be an emphasis on using the new laws and rights of foster parents, and understanding both their potential and their limitations. During the workshop, participants will collaborate on and practice new strategies for verbal and written communication with the courts. Your voice should be heard at every stage of the court proceedings!

### Advocating in the Schools –

#### Sarah Fox and Michelle E. Wangerin

This workshop will discuss how to navigate your kids' school system, both in the realm of special ed, and for kids without IEP/504 plans. Effective strategies for communicating with teachers and administrators will be presented. It will include discussion about the new laws regarding educational stability and transition planning, as well as the role foster parents can play in advocating for a child in their care and get the most out of the school experience for your child.

### Legislative Advocacy –

#### Scott Maltzie

This workshop will focus on how to actively engage with the political process in New Hampshire, which has the third largest legislature in the world. Scott will present an overview of the levels of New Hampshire government and its legislative processes. He will discuss how to navigate our statehouse and effectively speak with elected representatives in order to advocate for positive political change for foster kids and families.



## Panel Discussion

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Moderated by Bobbie Gaudette, NH FAPA Executive Director

#### Panel Members:

- Joe Ribsam, DCYF Director
- Moira O'Neill, Director, Office of the Child Advocate
- Honorable Susan W. Ashley; Presiding Judge, Rochester District Court
- CASA Supervisor, Marcia Allison
- Bureau Chief of DCYF Field Services, Mike O'Connor

## Childcare

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Conference attendees must make their own childcare arrangements. We do not have onsite childcare.

- Childcare Reimbursement Forms will be available at the conference (but not before).
- In order to qualify for reimbursement, you must submit the form to Granite State College by **November 15, 2018**.
- The Childcare Reimbursement Form must be signed by the childcare provider.

Additional reimbursement information will be provided at the conference.

## Granite State College

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The NH FAPA Conference is brought to you by the **Child Welfare Education Partnership at Granite State College**.

We offer caregiver training programs to foster and adoptive parents, residential staff, relative caregivers, and other eligible community members. GSC also provides pre-service and on-going training to DCYF child welfare and juvenile justice staff.

## Registration

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Register early to guarantee your space!

### Registration Fees:

\$25 - foster/adoptive/relative caregiver parents | \$40 - couples | \$30 - professionals | Additional \$10 fee if registering after October 5, 2018

### Register online:

Registration is online with credit cards and e-checks only.

### Payment is due in advance at time of registration.

We cannot accept payment at the conference. The registration fee includes all workshops, breakfast, buffet lunch, and sundae bar.

### Registration fees are non-refundable.

If you do not attend, you will not receive a refund. You will not receive confirmation of your registration prior to the conference.

### Questions?

Contact GSC at (603) 271-6625 or [etp.info@granite.edu](mailto:etp.info@granite.edu)

[Register Here](#)

# Directions

## DIRECTIONS - from North or South

- Take I-93 to Exit 25 - NH-175A/Holderness Rd - toward Plymouth.
- Turn right onto Bridge St./NH-175A and continue to the roundabout.
- Enter the roundabout and take the 2nd exit onto High St. (as if going straight through).
- Proceed a short distance to Langdon St. (you will pass Prospect Dining Hall on the right as you go).

## Parking

Turn right on Langdon Street. Parking is immediately on your right. There are two separate lots. Use either and walk back to Prospect Dining Hall (refer to campus map).

## Conference

Conference registration, keynote, panel discussion, and meals will be in the Newfound Room at **Prospect Dining Hall**. Workshops are in **Hyde Hall**.

