

# OVS Victim Service Academy Trainings

## Course Catalog Winter 2023



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.

This winter, we are pleased to offer an in-person academy cohort at John Jay College in New York City. This 3-day 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.

All participants will attend sessions on trauma-informed helping skills, self-care, and cultural competence.

### Target Audience

Victim Service Academy Trainings are for entry-level victim advocates. Due to the high level of interactivity for all sessions, this academy training cohort will be limited to 50 participants.

### Academy Schedule

Winter 2023

January 31 – February 2

### Academy Agenda

<b>Day 1</b>
Understanding Reactions to Stress and Trauma
Promoting Personal Resilience: Caring for Self While Caring for Others
Applying Core Helping Skills (with breakouts)
<b>Day 2</b>
Providing Trauma-Informed Care
Working with Children and Adolescents
Supporting Immigrants and Refugees: Trauma, Resilience, and Recovery
<b>Day 3</b>
Culture and Crisis: Integrating Social Justice and Victim Services

## Course Catalog

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### **Understanding Reactions to Stress and Trauma**

*Amy Nitza, Ph.D, LMHC*

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

### **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

### **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

## **Providing Trauma-Informed Care**

*Martyn Whittingham, Ph.D, CGP*

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

## **Working with Children and Adolescents**

*Craig Haen, Ph.D.*

This 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 to build a hopeful future.

At the end of the session, 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

## **Supporting Immigrants and Refugees: Trauma, Resilience, and Recovery**

*Eric C. Chen, Ph.D*

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 considering potential constraints to service provision and in accordance with culturally responsive and trauma-informed best practices.

At the end of the session, 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.

## **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)

## Course Instructors



### **Amy Nitza, Ph.D., LMHC**

Amy Nitza, Ph.D., (she/her) 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.



### **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, Ph.D., (he/him) 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.



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

Craig Haen, Ph.D., (he/him) 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.



### **Martyn Whittingham, CGP**

Martyn Whittingham, Ph.D., CGP, (he/him) is a licensed psychologist in Ohio. He is a Fellow of the American Group Psychotherapy Association (AGPA) and Division 49 (Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy) of the American Psychological Association as well as being a Certified Group Therapist. He is a former President of Division 49 of the American Psychological Association. He currently serves on AGPA's Science to Service Task Force, APA's Health Care Financing Advisory Group, the National Health Service (United Kingdom) Advisory Board on Group Training Standards and on the Editorial Board of the International Journal for Group Psychotherapy. Dr. Whittingham is the founder of

Focused Brief Group Therapy (FBGT), an integrative interpersonal approach to reducing interpersonal distress in less than eight sessions. He has presented on the topic nationally and internationally, including invited addresses at Stanford University Psychiatry, Peking University Psychiatric Hospital and McClean Hospital, a Harvard University-affiliated institution. The approach is utilized widely across the USA as well as internationally. FBGT has been featured in The Sage Encyclopedia of Theory in Group Counseling and Psychotherapy (Neukreg, 2015). The book and video are under contract with APA Press and will be coming out in 2023. Dr. Whittingham has been the recipient of two national awards for group therapy. The first was awarded in 2010 by the Association for Specialists in Group Work, for excellence and innovation in Group Practice. APA's Society for Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy, a division of the American Psychological Association, also recently named him their 2021 Group Dynamics Teacher of the Year. Dr. Whittingham has authored and co-authored numerous book chapters and journal articles.