



New England Council on Crime and Delinquency

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2026 Institute Schedule

October 25– 28, 2026 ~ Warwick, Rhode Island

Monday, October 26, 2026

OPENING KEYNOTE/PLENARY ~ 9:00am – 10:00am

The SISCO Method of Rapport-Based Interviewing: Former Expert DoD Interrogator Shares Non-Accusatory, Strategic Tactics to Get the Truth

Presenter: Lena Sisco, MA

Description:

In this workshop, Lena will provide you with actionable skills from a proven framework she developed called the Sisco Interviewing Method. It is a strategic, rapport-based, science-backed, non-accusatory approach to communicating with people in ways that foster psychological safety, build trust, and encourage honesty. Drawing from her experience as a former military interrogator who conducted hundreds of interrogations at Camp Delta in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, after 9/11, she understands that people don't have to speak and that interviewing can test one's own will, patience, and skill. Lena's method draws on psychology, including understanding human behavioral drivers, personality traits and disorders, deceptive analysis, and cognitive interviewing to help interviewers build deeper

connections, strengthen trust, avoid false confessions, and gather truthful information. She will show you how ineffective questions can give someone a way out, make it easy for them to lie by omission, or make or break trust. In addition, Lena will teach you proven ways to identify deception and bring someone to the breaking point, so they thank you for allowing them to be honest.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Develop rapport and persuasion. Participants will learn to connect with the person and leverage mirror neurons to help persuade them to want to be open. Practitioners need to build unbeatable rapport and trust to convince others to be open and honest. Rapport is about being in alignment; you are either similar to them, or you are the type of person they want to be.
- Decode what drives human behavior. There is one key factor that drives human behavior. By understanding it, one can easily influence honesty and accurately read others' behaviors to identify when they are being truthful and when they are lying. Participants will learn the most accurate indicator of deception and be able to differentiate between when someone is stressed and when someone is stressed from lying.
- Discover effective interviewing skills to get to the truth. Participants will learn how to ask the right questions to get the detailed information that is needed. Participants will learn advanced questioning techniques to build rapport, gain trust, and get the truth. Participants will learn how to uncover a person's motivations and needs to gain cooperation.

Presenter:

Lena Sisco, MA is the CEO and Founder of two companies, The Congruency Group and Sector Intelligence. She is a former Naval Intelligence Officer and Marine Corps-certified interrogator who conducted hundreds of interrogations during the Global War on Terror. She is an expert in body language, communication techniques, lie detection, and leadership. She appears on multiple news outlets, FoxLiveNow, Newsmax, and CourtTV, as an expert in body language. She has appeared on the HBO Series "Burden of Proof," Reelz Series, "Killer Performance," and two Emmy-nominated Court TV shows. She is a TEDx speaker, a keynote speaker, and an expert panelist for SPYEX and the SPY Museum in Washington, D.C. Since 2003, Lena has trained the Department of Defense, government agencies, law enforcement, special forces, and private sector industries in body language, interviewing, detecting deception, elicitation, executive presence, and change leadership. She is the author of four books.

Morning Sessions ~ 10:15am – 11:45am

Workshop 1:

Prepared, Not Panicked: Tools for Readiness in Critical Incidents

Presenter: Major Shawn Largy, AS

Description:

Current events involving active shooter incidents often leave individuals feeling unprepared and uncertain about how to respond. This workshop provides practical preparedness strategies to build confidence and reduce hesitation during critical incidents. Participants will learn proactive planning techniques, situational awareness, and tools to prevent freezing under stress. The session also introduces a personal “go bucket” concept for shelter-in-place readiness and emphasizes pre-planning and environmental problem-solving to improve response in high-stress situations.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Utilize a simple action framework to help overcome freezing, quickly assess options, and make safer decisions during an active threat or rapidly evolving situation.
- Identify exits, cover, barricade options, and everyday objects that can be used to increase safety and buy time during an incident.
- Create personal and workplace action plans, including “go bucket” readiness concepts and strategies for sheltering in place during extended emergencies.

Presenter:

Major Shawn Largy, AS is a seasoned corrections professional with over 36 years of experience in training supervision, emergency response, and correctional team leadership with the Rhode Island Department of Corrections. He currently serves as Major and Training Supervisor, where he leads Correctional Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.) training programs and oversees staff development, operational readiness and emergency preparedness initiatives. Throughout his career, he has held progressive leadership roles within CERT operations, specializing in riot control, high-risk incident response, and crisis management. He is a certified SIG Active Shooter Response Instructor and has developed and delivered training programs focused on tactical readiness and active threat response. Shawn has also provided international instruction through the Prison Emergency Response Program in the Caribbean. He is widely recognized for his expertise in incident command systems, staff training, and operational preparedness, and has received the Corrections Meritorious Award for his service.

Workshop 2:

Balancing Safety and Growth: A Comprehensive Approach to Managing Sexual Offenders in the Community

Presenters: Leslie Drummond, PhD, Research Manager
Jessica J. Warner, PhD, Senior Research Associate

Description:

This workshop introduces a comprehensive model for managing sexual offenders in the community grounded in the Principles of Effective Intervention. The model emphasizes risk-based supervision, cognitive-behavioral strategies, and reentry planning. Participants learn to apply validated risk and responsivity tools, tailor interventions to individual needs and implement fidelity monitoring and outcome measurement. Strengths-based rehabilitation from the Good Lives Model is integrated alongside Containment Model strategies, including multidisciplinary collaboration, supervision, polygraph use, and victim-centered safeguards.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the components and structure of the comprehensive model for sexual offender management.
- Identify components of the model that can be attributed to the three main theoretical models.
- Design supervision strategies that integrate accountability with rehabilitation.

Presenters:

Leslie Drummond, PhD is the Research Manager at the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI). She works with both the research and implementation teams to measure success within the Institute and with external partners. Dr. Drummond has led projects funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention focused on system reform while also managing, training, and assessing for UC's Evidence-based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC). She holds a PhD in Cognitive Neuroscience from the George Washington University. Dr. Drummond's background is in Experimental Psychology/Physiology with performance in extreme environmental conditions (e.g. hypoxia, spatial disorientation, fatigue) and she has worked with academic, industry and military collaborators in support of vulnerable and underserved populations.

Jessica J. Warner, PhD joined the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute as a Senior Research Associate (SRA) in January 2024. As an SRA, she works with agencies, practitioners, scholars, justice-involved individuals, and her team to research develop, disseminate, and implement evidence-based practices in corrections. Dr. Warner has served as a consultant to many correctional agencies nationally and internationally by providing training, technical assistance, and evaluation services. She earned her doctorate

in Criminal Justice from the School of Criminal Justice at the University of Cincinnati in 2015. Dr. Warner's practical experience includes working as a quality improvement manager and security staff at various community correctional facilities. Her research specializations include correctional rehabilitation, reentry, justice and community collaborations, organizational climate in corrections and victimization. Dr. Warner has published in Criminal Justice Policy Review, Corrections: Policy, Practice and Research, and the Journal of School Violence.

Workshop 3:

From Community Crisis to Connection: Practical Skills for Engaging Gang-Impacted Youth

Presenter: Jessie Drew, LMHC, CAADC, LCDP

Description:

Youth impacted by gang involvement face barriers linked to trauma, community violence, systemic inequities, and exclusionary practices. This session explores how Functional Family Therapy – Gang (FFT-G), a strengths-based, family-centered model, promotes equity and long-term success. Participants will learn practical strategies for engagement with youth and young adults, de-escalation, reframing, and coordination across systems while maintaining community safety and trust. The session emphasizes restorative approaches, youth/family voice, and interactive skill-building to support immediate, effective intervention.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the overlap between oppositional behavior & trauma and the core principles and structure of Functional Family Therapy – Gang (FFT-G), including how it addresses trauma, community violence and systemic inequities impacting gang-involved youth.
- Identify practical strategies (e.g., engagement techniques, relational reframing, de-escalation, cross-system coordination) to support gang-involved or affiliated youth and their families while maintaining safety, dignity and high expectations.
- Understand local gang dynamics and systemic barriers to identify opportunities for integrating restorative, family-centered, and evidence-based approaches that elevate youth and family voice and improve outcomes.

Presenter:

Jessie Drew, LMHC, CAADC, LCDP is the Senior Director of Evidence-Based Family Therapy at Child & Family in Rhode Island, where she leads innovative, community-embedded approaches to crisis response and system diversion for youth and families.

Child & Family is the first organization in the world to implement Functional Family Therapy – Gang (FFT-G) outside of the research phase, positioning Rhode Island as a leader in national crisis system transformation efforts. With nine years of experience at Child & Family, Jessie is not only a system lead but also an active FFT-G clinician, bringing a frontline perspective to the challenges of engaging high-risk, system-involved youth and families. Her clinical work centers on trauma-informed engagement, family-based interventions, and reducing repeated contact with law enforcement, probation and emergency services. Jessie also serves as a national consultant for FFT, LLC, providing training and consultation to FFT teams across the country including Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Michigan, Virginia, and New York. Her work supports agencies in implementing FFT’s evidence-based family interventions with fidelity while adapting to local crisis response systems and community needs.

Early Afternoon Sessions ~ 1:00pm – 2:30pm

Workshop 1:

De-Escalation in Action: Practical Skills for Listening, Responding, and De-Escalating

Presenter: Steven Hoard

Description:

This workshop focuses on building effective tools to manage challenging interactions through intentional communication. Participants will learn active listening techniques, verbal and non-verbal strategies, and approaches to reducing tension before it escalates. The workshop emphasizes practical, real-world application, helping attendees improve their ability to recognize escalation cues, respond constructively, and maintain professionalism in difficult situations across workplace and community settings.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Utilize active listening techniques that de-escalate tension in real time (reflecting, paraphrasing, and validating without escalating emotion).
- Learn verbal de-escalation phrasing to reduce defensiveness and redirect difficult conversations.
- Utilize communication repositioning strategies that redirect interactions toward cooperation rather than conflict.

Presenter:

Steven Hoard is a Correctional Officer with the Rhode Island Department of Corrections (RIDOC), serving since December 1996, and currently assigned to a minimum security facility. Throughout his career, Steven has held leadership and investigative roles, including serving as a Three-Day Rule Investigator and Lieutenant. He is currently the Team Leader of the RIDOC Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) and has been an active member of CIT for over 24

years. In addition to his operational responsibilities, Steven serves on multiple state boards and steering committees focused on policies, crisis response, de-escalation strategies, and mental health initiatives. He also serves as an Adjunct Instructor at both the Rhode Island Municipal Police Academy and the RIDOC Training Academy, where he teaches courses in Active Listening, Interpersonal Communications, and Hostage Awareness. While in this role, the CIT also developed a First Responder Training Program designed to educate and prepare RIDOC personnel in crisis recognition, communication skills and effective response strategies.

Workshop 2:

Intersection of Human Trafficking and the Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ)

Presenters: A. Roy Curtis, BA
Trissie Casanova, MSW, LICSW
Caitlyn Bickford
Alexander Simeone, MPA

Description:

This session explores the critical intersection between human trafficking and the Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ), equipping participants with practical knowledge and tools to better identify and respond to at-risk youth. Attendees will learn to recognize key indicators of both sex trafficking and labor trafficking, with particular attention to the heightened vulnerabilities faced by runaway and homeless youth.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify indicators of sex trafficking and labor trafficking among juvenile populations.
- Identify key partner agencies within your state and resources to support case management.
- Apply coordinated response strategies that align with ICJ requirements.

Presenters:

Roy Curtis, BA has served with the Maine Department of Corrections for 29 years following completion of his Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology from University of Southern Maine. He currently serves as a Regional Correctional Manager for Juvenile Field Services, where he works closely with Community Corrections Officers and stakeholders across four counties. Roy has served on the Executive Committee for the Juvenile Restorative Justice Council, as well as the Department of Corrections Restorative Justice Committee. Since 2019, Roy has represented the State of Maine as the Deputy Compact Administrator and Commissioner on the Interstate Commission for Juveniles (ICJ). In this role, he has worked to strengthen the ICJ State Council and enhance ICJ policies and protocols within the Maine Department of Corrections. Within the Commission, Roy currently serves as the

Chair of the Workgroup on Returning Non-Delinquent Youth, Vice-Chair of the Information Technology Committee, and Alternate Regional Representative for the East Region. Previously, Roy served on the ICJ Rules Committee and the UNITY User Acceptance Team.

Trissie Casanova, LICSW serves as the ICJ/ICPC Deputy Compact Administrator and Human Trafficking Consultant for the State of Vermont. She has served in these roles since 2016. Ms. Casanova has worked for the Vermont Department for Children and Families Family Services Division for over 23 years, working as a child protection worker, juvenile probation officer and child protection investigator. She currently chairs the ICJ East Region, is the AAICPC Executive Committee Vice-President, and co-chairs the Revised Compact Committee. Ms. Casanova sits on the Vermont Training & Outreach Committee on Human Trafficking; co-chairs a Human Trafficking Multi-Disciplinary Team in Vermont's largest county; and, co-chairs DCF's Human Trafficking Work Group. She obtained her Master's degree in Social Work at the University of Vermont and her undergraduate degree in Psychology at St. Michael's College.

Caitlyn Bickford began her career with the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families (NH DCYF) in August 2007 as a Child Protective Services Worker (CPSW). Working first as a Family Service CPSW with families, following substantiated findings of abuse or neglect, her work focused on supporting families through reunification and helping parents safely maintain their children in their homes whenever possible. Caitlyn then worked as a Permanency CPSW, with a focus on achieving safe, sustainable permanency for children who were legally free for adoption, before being promoted to Permanency Supervisor, where she supervised a team of six to eight workers while maintaining a strong focus on achieving permanency for children in the office's care. In August 2017, Caitlyn accepted a position as the Deputy Compact Administrator for the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC). Recognizing the significant similarities and opportunities for collaboration between ICPC and ICJ, and the unique intersection of child protection and juvenile justice within NH DCYF, Caitlyn advocated for both interstate programs to be overseen by the same administrator, and in 2018, Caitlyn became New Hampshire's Commissioner for ICJ, expanding her leadership responsibilities across the state's interstate programs. Today, as New Hampshire's Interstate Programs Administrator, Caitlyn oversees the state's ICPC, ICJ, and foster care and kinship licensing programs. Her career reflects nearly two decades of experience in child welfare, with a professional focus spanning child protection, permanency, interstate practice, juvenile justice and family-based care.

Alexander Simeone, MPA is the Human Trafficking Prevention Coordinator for the State of Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), a role he has held since June 2018. With over a decade of dedicated service in crisis intervention and multi-disciplinary coordination, Alex specializes in establishing victim-centered responses that

unite medical, social service, and law enforcement agencies. In his role, he works side by side with law enforcement to help recover missing children. Alex is a member of Rhode Island's anti-human trafficking task force, where he sits on multiple subcommittees from policy to training. He serves as the internal trainer for Rhode Island DCYF on human trafficking prevention. Notably, Alex's team in the Special Investigations Unit was honored as the 2025 Rhode Island P.A.C.E. Award recipients for outstanding teamwork, exemplifying the core P.A.C.E. pillars of Prevention, Accountability, Collaboration, and Engagement.

Prior to his current role, Alex served as the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Coordinator at Day One RI, where he acted as the primary community referral point and successfully led information-sharing and cross-agency collaborative efforts. An experienced speaker and educator, Alex frequently develops and facilitates specialized training sessions for diverse audiences. He holds a Master of Public Administration from Roger Williams University (December 2023), a Bachelor of Arts in History from Rhode Island College (January 2014), and an Associate of Arts in Education/Special Education from the Community College of Rhode Island (May 2009). Alex's unique educational background, combined with his deep field experience, drives his commitment to community leadership and systemic public health solutions.

Workshop 3:

Don't Just Assess – Address: Turning Data into Lasting Change

Presenters: Becca Ford, M.Ed.
Rick Parsons, MA

Description:

Risk, need, and strength assessments are essential – but often underutilized. This session pairs a former educator with a seasoned justice professional to present a practical framework to community supervision. Learn how to translate assessment data into targeted learning objectives, actionable interventions, and skill-building opportunities. Blending instructional insight with real-world supervision experience, participants will explore how to drive meaningful behavior change through intentional, skill-based engagement.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of using risk/needs assessments to inform interventions.
- Match criminogenic needs with appropriate skills and tools.
- Implement practical strategies that reinforce skill acquisition in real-world contexts.

Presenters:

Becca Ford, M.Ed. is an Evidence-Based Solutions Consultant with Empower Community Care and a former classroom teacher, academic associate, and school counselor with over 15 years of experience in education and behavior change. Her work focuses on helping Probation and Parole professionals apply evidence-based practices by translating assessment data into actionable, skill-based interventions. With a strong foundation in instructional design and data-informed teaching, Becca brings a unique “teacher mindset” to community supervision, equipping practitioners to move beyond compliance-driven approaches by developing targeted learning objectives, reinforcing cognitive-behavioral skills and supporting long-term behavior change. She is passionate about offering solutions that provide meaningful outcomes for justice-involved individuals.

Rick Parsons, MA joined Carey Group in 2022 as Deputy Director after 30+ years of experience in probation and parole in two Pennsylvania counties. In addition to his leadership roles at the county level, he served on the Governor’s Board of Probation, the Executive Board of the County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Evidence-Based Practices Implementation Team. He specializes in identifying organizational roadblocks and facilitating needed organizational changes.

Late Afternoon Sessions ~ 2:45pm – 4:15pm

Workshop 1:

Stress Management - Mastering Stress on the Job & Off the Clock

Presenter: Megan L. Taylor

Description:

This session equips professionals with practical tools to stay effective and in control under pressure, on and off the job. The session will cover stress management strategies, resiliency building, and tactical breathing techniques, supported by interactive practice. Participants will learn short, mid, and long-term approaches to stress regulation, gain a clear understanding of the body’s physical stress response, and develop skills to regulate it in real time. The training also focuses on recognizing early signs of burnout to support sustained effectiveness in high-demand environments.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Recognize their body’s physical stress response and use practical techniques to regulate it in the moment under pressure.
- Gain hands-on, repeatable breathing and grounding strategies that can be used immediately in high-stress situations to regain control and improve focus.

- Develop short, mid, and long-term strategies to manage stress consistently on and off the job, including tools to recognize early signs of burnout, and take corrective action.

Presenter:

Megan Taylor serves as the Departmental Grievance Coordinator for the Rhode Island Department of Corrections and is an active member of the Department's Crisis Intervention Team (CIT). She holds advanced Crisis Intervention certifications through both the FBI and the Rhode Island Crisis Intervention Team (RICIT) and has training in Psychological First Aid and Stress Management and Resiliency (SMART). With experience presenting on stress management within first responder training environments, Megan brings a unique perspective to the field of wellness. Her approach to resilience is deeply practical, tactical, and grounded, drawing from both her professional background in high-stress correctional settings and her personal journey in developing effective strategies for health and well-being. Megan is dedicated to providing actionable tools for resilience that professionals can apply both on the job and in their personal lives.

Workshop 2:

AI and the Human Element: Enhancing Corrections Through Generative Tools

Presenters: Leslie Drummond, PhD
Jessica J. Warner, PhD

Description:

This interactive workshop examines how generative AI can support – rather than replace – the human connection central to corrections work. Participants will gain a practical overview of AI tools such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot and Canva, with hands-on demonstrations. Using real-world “day in the life” examples, the session highlights when AI can enhance productivity, documentation, and decision-making, and when empathy, ethics and professional judgment must lead. Attendees leave with practical and ethical guidance for meaningful AI integration.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Apply generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Canva) to common corrections tasks.
- Evaluate when AI use is appropriate by distinguishing tasks suited for automation from those requiring human judgment, empathy and discretion in supervision contexts.
- Integrate AI ethically into daily workflows using practical decision-making frameworks that center human connection, accountability, and professional responsibility.

Presenters:

Leslie Drummond (See presenter biography listed under Monday morning, workshop 2.)

Jessica J. Warner (See presenter biography listed under Monday morning, workshop 2.)

Workshop 3:

Safety Without Removal: Practical Tools for Stabilizing High-Risk Youth in the Community

Presenters: Jason Colon, BA, Organizational Leadership Studies
Kristina Jandron, LMHC

Description:

This interactive workshop provides participants with practical field-tested strategies to build and implement real-time community-based safety plans for youth experiencing behavioral health crises, system instability, or justice involvement. The focus is on translating risk into action, strengthening family and caregiver capacity, and coordinating effectively across child welfare, education, and juvenile justice systems. Participants will learn how to move beyond compliance-based safety planning to develop structured, behavior-specific intervention plans; distinguish between false stability and true risk reduction; and implement high-frequency, high-intensity contact models that support stabilization in the home and community.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Translate “risk” into actionable safety plans.
- Create real-time intervention structures (what you DO when risk escalates).
- Provide system coordination to prevent unnecessary removal/reincarceration.

Presenters:

Jason Colon, BA is an experienced Program Coordinator and Supervisor at Tides Family Services who has worked with youth and young adults ages 10 through 24 throughout the state of Rhode Island. He has had a specific focus in supporting youth who have dealt with, or been involved with, the Juvenile Justice system. Jason has found that in Juvenile Justice youth driven work, one has to be non-judgmental, transformative, and understanding in all situations. He has demonstrated excellence in the development of programs, such as the racial justice initiative, and the creation of curriculum specifically for young people. Jason serves youth throughout RI, helping them to define their skills and interests, and create plans that will enable them to take advantage of post-secondary, workforce, and/or trade school opportunities. He has provided programs that encourage the use of social and emotional learning to understand young adults in their environments. Jason has a proven track record of leading initiatives and programs which support young people in developing

their skills and talents, allowing them to excel, and providing them with the tools they need to achieve success.

Kristina Jandron, LMHC is a dedicated clinical leader with over 15 years of progressive experience in behavioral health, juvenile justice and educational settings, along with more than 20 years of service at Tides Family Services in Rhode Island. She currently serves as Clinical Director of the Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) and Seven Challenges Substance Use Program, where she leads program development, clinical oversight, and multidisciplinary teams serving adolescents with co-occurring needs. Throughout her career, Kristina has held a range of roles including Clinical Director of the Tides Outreach Program, Assistant Clinical Director, Clinician and school-based leadership positions, giving her a comprehensive understanding of community-based, outpatient, and most systems of care. In addition, she brings over 13 years of experience as a private practice holistic mental health counselor, providing individual, family and couples therapy using integrative strengths-based approaches. Kristina is recognized for her expertise in program development, staff supervision and fostering trauma-informed environments that support both client outcomes and team growth. Kristina holds a master's degree and Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Holistic Counseling from Salve Regina University and is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor in Rhode Island. Her work is deeply rooted in the Lasallian mission, reflecting a longstanding commitment to serving at-risk youth and families with dignity, compassion, and integrity.

Tuesday, October 27, 2026

Early Morning Sessions ~ 8:30am – 10:00am

Workshop 1:

How the Fusion Center Can Help You!

Presenter: Raymond J. Angell III, Esq.

Description:

In this session attendees will learn what the RI State Fusion Center can do for you and your agencies. Fusion Centers across the nation support local, state, and federal agencies providing information and training. A Fusion Center gathers, analyzes, and shares threat-related intelligence to prevent crime and terrorism, as well as improves information sharing in an effort to enhance our country's security. Additionally, attendees will learn about the current trends in Nihilistic Violent Extremism (NVE) and Sovereign Citizen trends.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Gain knowledge of Fusion Center capabilities and how agencies will benefit from working with their State's Fusion Center.

- Understand Nihilistic Violence Extremism trends, including 764 activity.
- Gain exposure to Sovereign Citizen movement and how to interact with followers of the movement.

Presenter:

Raymond J Angell III, Esq. has over 40 years of experience in the criminal justice field as a local Law Enforcement Officer, attorney, Professor, and Department Chair of the Criminal Justice AS and BS Degree Programs at New England Institute of Technology, where he created both unique and hands-on educational programs from the ground up. He has done extensive course development and has served as Legal Counsel for the town of Coventry, RI. Attorney Angell currently serves as an Intelligence Analyst at the RI State Fusion Center. He is also a Bail Commissioner/Justice of the Peace for the RI 6th Division District Court.

Workshop 2:

Biohazard/Death/Hoarding/Drug Scene Safety Seminar

Presenter: Kerry Delano, BA

Description:

This session will explore how to safely navigate hazardous situations that staff are commonly faced with while on the job. Exposure control plans, personal protective equipment (donning and doffing), pre and post exposure to various hazards (needles, how to disinfect shoes and clothing, etc.), post exposure plans and risk management, bloodborne and airborne diseases, and death scenes will be discussed. Additionally, safety and procedure when dealing with hoarding/squalor homes, and all the hazards that come with those situations (feces, mold, bed bugs, animals, etc.) will be covered. Finally, there will be a discussion on drug/overdose scenes and how to protect oneself and avoid being exposed to fentanyl, meth, etc.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Appropriately, don and doff personal protective equipment.
- Safely navigate hazardous scenes.
- Handle exposures and what to do to prevent them.

Presenter:

Kerry Delano, BA graduated from the University of Massachusetts Amherst with a BA in Communications and Sociology. Kerry has worked in the biohazard remediation industry for over 17 years and has been teaching safety seminars to law enforcement, housing authorities, property management, and public health officials for over 15 years.

Workshop 3:

Gang Identifiers (Clothing/Tattoos/Symbols/Graffiti)

Presenter: Lieutenant Stephen Perry

Description:

Gang members utilize a combination of specific clothing, tattoos, hand signs, and symbols to signal allegiance, claim territory and communicate with both allies and rivals. These indicators – often referred to by law enforcement as “SMT” (Scars, Marks, and Tattoos) or gang paraphernalia – are designed to be instantly recognizable to those “in the know”. There will also be discussion as to how to effectively work in collaboration with other agencies and law enforcement. Attendees will leave with the knowledge necessary to identify some of these signs and behaviors.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Recognize visible identifiers and behavioral indicators.
- Understand localized “hybrid” gangs and adaptability.
- Utilize multi-agency collaboration and information sharing.

Presenter:

Lieutenant Stephen Perry is a corrections professional offering 29 years of comprehensive experience in custody and institutional security, including 10 years of leadership as a Lieutenant at the RIDOC. He is a recognized expert in gang intelligence with 25 years of specialized experience in identification, validation, and training surrounding security risk groups (SRGs). Lieutenant Perry has demonstrated proven expertise in developing and instructing gang recognition curricula, enhancing staff safety, and managing high-risk inmate populations to maintain institutional order.

Late Morning Sessions ~ 10:15am – 11:45am

Workshop 1:

From Conversation to Confession: Modern Interview and Interrogation Strategies

Presenters: Lieutenant Michael A. Pezzullo, MS

Description:

This workshop examines modern, ethical approaches to investigative interviewing, emphasizing rapport-building, psychology, and evidence-based techniques. Drawing on real-world law enforcement experience, participants will explore legal considerations, effective questioning strategies, and the transition from information gathering to admission-seeking. Through case examples and discussion, attendees will gain practical tools to enhance interviews while minimizing the risk of false confessions.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Apply a structured rapport-building approach to quickly establish trust and cooperation with victims, witnesses, and suspects improving the quality and quantity of information obtained.
- Use strategic questioning techniques to guide conversations, clarify inconsistencies, and elicit more accurate and detailed statements.
- Recognize and mitigate risks of false confessions by incorporating evidence-based practices, maintaining legal compliance, and avoiding common interrogation pitfalls that can compromise cases.

Presenter:

Lieutenant Michael A. Pezzullo, MS serves as a Lieutenant with the Cranston Police Department and Department Chair of Criminal Justice Studies at the New England Institute of Technology. With nearly 30 years of experience in law enforcement and higher education, he has held key roles including patrol officer, detective sergeant, and supervisor of criminal investigations, leading complex cases and supporting human trafficking enforcement efforts. Lieutenant Pezzullo has also been a committed educator since 2008 and currently serves as the Lead Crime Scene Investigation Instructor at the Rhode Island Municipal Police Academy, where he has trained thousands of recruits in forensic practices. Lieutenant Pezzullo is widely recognized for bridging the gap between practice and instruction bringing real-world investigative insight into the classroom while mentoring students to success in competitive crime scene investigation events. He holds a Master of Science in Investigations from the University of New Haven and is dedicated to advancing professional standards, building collaborative partnerships, and preparing future leaders in the criminal justice field.

Workshop 2:

Resilience in the Trenches: Combating Compassion Fatigue and Burnout

Presenter: Dr. John Watts, DCJ

Description:

This workshop is designed to equip professionals with essential strategies to recognize, prevent, and combat the effects of compassion fatigue and burnout. The high-stress nature of working in the criminal justice system can lead to emotional exhaustion, decreased job performance, and personal distress. This workshop will explore the psychological and physiological impact of chronic exposure to trauma and high-pressure environments. Participants will learn practical resilience-building techniques, self-care strategies, and organizational approaches to foster a culture of well-being.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the early warning signs of compassion fatigue, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress within themselves and their colleagues.
- Understand how prolonged exposure to trauma and stress affects mental, emotional, and physical well-being.
- Explore organizational policies and leadership approaches that promote a supportive and trauma-informed work environment.

Presenter:

Dr. John Watts is an Assistant Professor and Program Director of the Criminal Justice and Restorative Justice Program at the University of Saint Joseph. Dr. Watts is a retired Chief Probation Officer with 20 years of experience at the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (CSSD). He is a certified instructor with the Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) Council and a nationally recognized trainer and consultant with Policy Research Associates and the Center for Effective Public Policy (CEPP). Dr. Watts is also a certified trauma trainer with the SAMHSA GAINS Center, where he supports trauma-informed care initiatives within correctional and community-based systems.

Workshop 3:

Different, Not Less: Supporting Autistic and Neurodivergent Individuals in the Courtroom and the Community

Presenters: Kate Hooven, MS

Ryan Hooven, BA, Justice System Presentation Assistant, PA ASERT
Collaborative

Description:

Neurodiversity, including autism and other neurological differences, is being diagnosed in increasing numbers. In this session, we will explore understanding and accommodating autism and other neurodiversities in the justice system, the courtroom, and the community. This is accomplished by gaining a better understanding of individuals with neurodiversity as well as exploring the importance of agency training, accommodations in court, and in the community. Ryan, an autistic self-advocate, will share his lived experience as an autistic adult, creating a personal narrative for the session.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify accommodations needed in the justice system, including the courts, corrections, and law enforcement community to better support individuals with autism and neurodiversity.
- Apply the information gained from the workshop and implement various strategies to increase awareness and acceptance for autistic and neurodivergent individuals and those who support them in your courts, corrections, and justice systems.
- Learn effective ways to prepare autistic and neurodivergent individuals for court appearances, interviews, and probation supervision success.

Presenters:

Kate Hooven, MS is the Justice System Project Coordinator for ASERT (Autism Services, Education, Resources and Training) where she uses her background as a former juvenile probation officer and juvenile court consultant for the PA Juvenile Court Judges Commission to train justice system personnel. Kate is also the mother of three amazing children, including her 24-year-old son Ryan who was diagnosed with autism when he was four years of age. Ryan graciously allows Kate to share his experiences as an autistic individual to personalize the ASERT justice training, as well as to raise awareness and promote acceptance for all autistic individuals.

Ryan Hooven, BA is a 24-year-old autistic self-advocate. Ryan graduated from Kutztown University with a BA in Music. While in his last semester of college, Ryan worked part time for ASERT (Autism Services, Education, Resource and Training) creating social stories for autistic college students as well as other resources. Ryan is now employed by ASERT as a Justice System Training Supporter, where he supports the justice system trainings by providing his lived experience as an autistic individual as well as offering suggestions for officers and court personnel on how to better interact with individuals with autism. Ryan enjoys playing video games, watching his favorite Youtubers, and traveling with his family.

Plenary ~ 1:45pm – 3:45pm

Coach or Referee? Aligning Practices with Purpose

Presenter: Brian Lovins, PhD, MSW

Description:

We have amazing staff who are invested in the outcomes of those we serve, yet we continue to struggle to make meaningful inroads into sustained behavioral change. We will explore what maintains this condition and help staff align the four core principles of coaching to their work every day. Participants will learn direct skills to implement a coaching approach to interventions.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Explore ways in which their approach (belief system) has significant effects on the success of individuals.
- Build meaningful interactions with people they serve and reduce the us versus them that forms between staff and individuals being served.
- Develop practical plays to utilize with people they serve and realign their metrics to be connected to success.

Presenter:

Brian Lovins, PhD, MSW is the President of Justice System Partners. He earned his PhD in Criminology from the University of Cincinnati School of Criminal Justice, and he is a past-President of the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA). Dr. Lovins has been instrumental in helping the criminal and juvenile justice systems create programs that align with best practices for over 30 years. He routinely consults with agencies regarding their implementation of a coaching framework within the context of evidence-based intervention, and the use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence. Dr. Lovins works closely with communities to develop effective strategies to improve the outcomes for individuals impacted by the system.