



Together we can face any challenges as deep as the ocean and as high as the sky.

*-Sonia Gandhi*

Dear VJJA Member:

We are excited to be able to meet and celebrate 32 years of the Spring Conference! There are a few things for you to know and do regarding the hotel and conference.

**HOTEL INFORMATION:**

The conference center is to the right of the main hotel entrance or center entrance of the “circle” drive as you are facing the ocean. Parking is across the street or there is on street parking available.

If you are staying at the hotel you can either park in the “circle” to check in or park in the hotel garage, which is across the street. There is limited space in the “circle” so please be aware. There are 2 towers to the hotel so make sure you clarify with the front desk which side you are on. Due to the number and style of the rooms, everyone is unable to be accommodated on the conference side. The hotel has an indoor lazy river and hot tub which will be open during your stay.

The hotel has two restaurants. Square Whale (sandwiches, pizza, etc) and Isle of Capri (Italian inspired and will only be open for dinner. Reservations are recommended). There are several restaurants within walking distance.

**MASKS ARE NOT REQUIRED.** However, wearing or not wearing a mask is a personal choice so choose what is comfortable for you.

**CONFERENCE INFORMATION:**

Registration will be from 8-9 am on Thursday and 8:30-9 on Friday as you enter the conference space. Breakfast & coffee will NOT be served this year and there will not be any food or drinks provided in the morning, although the hotel has a small store and there is a 7-11 across the street from the hotel. The Greenery (hotel restaurant) is open from 6:30-10:30 am for breakfast and hotel rooms have mini-fridges and microwaves.

Please be mindful that each person’s “perfect” temperature is different. We will do our best to have the rooms set at a comfortable level, but dress accordingly and bring a jacket/sweater/short sleeve/long sleeve/etc. Remember, we live in Virginia, and we can go from winter to summer and back to winter all in the same day 😊.

There will be a reception/networking social on Thursday evening in the Vista room at the hotel on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor from **5:00-8:00 pm**. Light hors d’oeuvres and beverages will be provided. No alcoholic beverages are to be in the main hotel areas/hallways.

**There will be a table in the back of the ballroom reserved for conference staff. PLEASE do not sit at this table. Conference staff are in and out of the room and we want to minimize the disruption to any speaker.**

**Bring cash and/or credit/debit card for:**

VJJA logo wear (limited availability, but items can be ordered)

50/50 Raffle for the Holiday Food Gift Cards

**Be sure to VISIT and THANK our vendors throughout the event because we could not do this without them!**

# TIDEWATER DISTRICT

## VIRGINIA JUVENILE JUSTICE ASSOCIATION


### 32nd ANNUAL SPRING INSTITUTE

**“Together we can face any challenge as deep as the ocean & as high as the sky”**

#### THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025

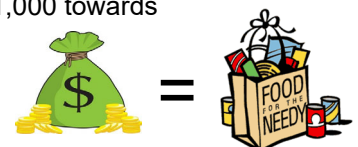
8:00 am - 9:00 am	<b>Registration/vendor visitation</b>	<i>(breakfast &amp; coffee not provided this year)</i>
9:00 am - 9:30 am	<b>Opening Remarks and Welcome!</b> Valarie Jordan-Hunter, VJJA Tidewater Chair Samantha Higgins, VJJA President	<i>Room: Cape Henry (1st floor)</i>
9:30 am - 12:00 pm	<b>Keynote: Mastering the Juggle: Balancing Caregiving, Career &amp; Everything in Between</b> Natalie Elliot Handy, Health Connect America <i>(Vendor visitation during 15 minute break)</i>	
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch buffet (provided)	<i>Room: Vista (6th floor)</i>
1:00 pm - 1:15 pm	<i>Vendor visitation</i>	

#### **AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS:** (Select one during each time frame)

1:15 pm - 2:45 pm	<b>Professional Ethics: Where Morality Meets Action</b> Nicole Washington, Training Specialist, DJJ	<i>Room: Croatan (1st floor)</i>
	<b>Cognitive Communication Disorders in System-Involved Youth</b> Allison Chappell, PhD., Anne Perrotti, PhD. & Tancy Vandecar-Burdin, PhD., ODU	<i>Room: Cape Henry (1st floor)</i>
	<b>Interstate Compact for Juveniles</b> Jessica Stefenack, VA ICJ Coordinator, DJJ	<i>Room: Vista (6th floor)</i>
2:45 pm - 3:00 pm	<i>Vendor visitation</i>	
3:00 pm - 4:30 pm	<b>Workshops Repeat: Select one of the three above</b>	
4:30 pm - 5:00 pm	Break to get ready for networking at 5:00 pm	
5:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Networking with light appetizers/drinks & the 13th annual limbo contest.	<i>Room: Vista (6th floor)</i>

#### FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025

8:45 am - 9:15 am	<b>Registration/vendor visitation</b>	<i>(breakfast &amp; coffee not provided this year)</i>
9:15 am - 9:30 am	<b>Opening remarks</b>	<i>Room: Cape Henry (1st floor)</i>
9:30 am - 12:00 pm	<b>General Session; Covid in Retrospect: The genie that won't go back in the bottle</b> Stephan Stark & Patrick Slifka, NCG <i>(Vendor visitation during 15 minute break)</i>	
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch buffet (provided)	<i>Room: Vista (6th floor)</i>
1:00 pm - 1:15 pm	<i>Vendor visitation</i>	
1:15 pm - 3:45 pm	<b>General Session; Workplace Safety</b> Allen Perry, Master Police Officer, VA. Beach Police Dept. <i>(Vendor visitation during 15 minute break)</i>	<i>Room: Cape Henry (1st floor)</i>
3:45pm - 4:15pm	Wrap up, evaluations, <b>door prizes &amp; 50/50 drawing</b> (bring cash & must be present to win). Every year around the winter holidays the VJJA Tidewater district donates \$1,000 towards food for families in need. The 50/50 drawing helps raise funds for this service project. 2024 conference winner left with over \$400.	



# NATALIE ELLIOTT HANDY



**THURSDAY  
AM**

## “Mastering the Juggle: Balancing Caregiving, Career & Everything in Between”

Natalie Elliott Handy, MSW, is a seasoned healthcare executive with 25 years of experience in the health and human services sector. She is the CEO of CareForward, an innovative platform that connects individuals in need with community volunteers and partner organizations, enhancing the quality of life for both caregivers and care recipients.

In addition to her role at CareForward, Natalie is the co-host of the podcast *Confessions of a Reluctant Caregiver*, alongside her sister JJ Elliott-Hill. Together, they lead numerous initiatives to support caregivers, including educational resources, community outreach, and the podcast, which has over 300K monthly downloads and streaming listens across 54 countries. Their work explores the challenges and rewards of caregiving, offering support, inspiration, and resources to caregivers worldwide.

Natalie also works for Health Connect America, where she supports initiatives across Virginia and eight southeastern states. Previously, she served as CEO of a statewide mental health organization, CEO of three psychiatric residential treatment facilities in Virginia, and VP of Utilization Review and Clinical Audit.

Prior to her role at CareForward, Natalie was CEO of a statewide mental health organization, CEO of three psychiatric residential treatment facilities in Virginia, and VP of Utilization Review and Clinical Audit. She is known for her work as a mental health concierge, advocating for systemic change at local, state, and federal levels, and for bridging gaps in services.

Natalie holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Hollins College and a Master of Social Work from West Virginia University. Based in Roanoke, Virginia, she resides with her husband, Jason, and their pets, Winston the Bulldog and Daisy the Beagle.

# NICOLE WASHINGTON



## **THU. PM BREAKOUT – “Professional Ethics: Where Morality Meets Action”**

### **Description:**

Our morals and ethical views are a significant and integral part of who we are and how we navigate the world. So, why would it be any different in the workplace? Join us as we discuss ethics, professional ethical practices and why even the most well-intentioned professionals stray from their own interests. Learn how we can improve our interactions with our co-workers and the youth that we serve.

### **Bio:**

Nicole Washington is a native of Fort Washington, Maryland. In 2013, she graduated from Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia earning a Bachelor’s degree in Criminology/Criminal Justice with a minor in Psychology. Following graduation, Nicole began to establish her roots in Richmond and found her purpose in providing counsel and mentoring to youth. She began her career with the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice in 2014 as a Juvenile Correctional Officer at Beaumont Juvenile Correctional Center. In 2016, she was promoted to the position of Residential Counselor and when Beaumont closed, she transitioned to the Central Admissions and Placement (CAP) Unit.

In her current role, as a Training and Development Specialist with the agency’s Training and Organizational Development Unit, she has spent the last three years organizing and passing on her expertise to oncoming and veteran DJJ employees. Nicole has a passion for educating her community on Mental Health, Trauma, and the impact that it has on our youth and families. She has two beautiful children and in her free time enjoys reading fiction novels and immersing herself in African American History.

# Allison Chappell, Anne Perrotti, Tancy Vandecar-Burdin

## THU. PM BREAKOUT – “Cognitive Communication Disorder (CCD) in System-Involved Youth”

**Description:** Research shows that system-involved youth have high rates of Cognitive Communication Disorders (CCDs), a group of disorders that affect communication through cognition and executive functioning (e.g., mental capacity and decision-making skills). Our presentation will provide an overview of CCDs, including their incidence, presentation, impact, and relevance to juvenile justice practice. We will discuss and solicit feedback on the results of a recent study conducted with DJJ personnel which examined perceptions of communication and language problems among youth, and how CCDs shape experiences, opportunities, and outcomes for youth and staff in the juvenile justice system.

### **Bios:**

- Dr. Allison Chappell is a Professor of Sociology and Criminal Justice at Old Dominion University (ODU). She has been conducting research on youth justice, policing, and inequality for 25 years.
- Dr. Anne Marie Perrotti is a certified speech-language pathologist and Associate Professor in Special Education at ODU. Her research uses interprofessional collaborative partnerships to promote equity in outcomes for historically excluded youth and young adults.
- Dr. Tancy Vandecar-Burdin is the Director of the Social Science Research Center (SSRC) at ODU. She has more than 25 years of experience with survey research, data collection/analysis, program evaluation, and general grant/contract management and serves as the University IRB Chair ensuring that research studies meet ethical standards, comply with federal regulations, and protect participants' rights and welfare.

# JESSICA STEFENACK

## **THU. PM BREAKOUT – “Interstate Compact for Juveniles”**

### **Description:**

This training will offer an overview on the ICJ process. We will cover Transfer of Supervision, Travel Permits, and Returns.

### **Bio:**

I am the Virginia ICJ Coordinator with DJJ. I graduated from East Carolina University in 2017 with a bachelor’s in science. My career with DJJ began in September 2017 when I accepted a position as a juvenile probation officer with Chesapeake Court Service Unit. In November 2023, I accepted my position as the Virginia ICJ Coordinator with the main responsibility of handling Returns and Runaways.

Beyond my professional achievements, I am a devoted wife and mother to a sweet 3-year-old boy. During my leisure time, I enjoy time with my family, outdoor exploration, and reading.



# STEPHAN STARK & PATRICK SLIFKA



## **FRI. AM GENERAL SESSION – “Covid in Retrospect: The genie that won’t go back in the bottle”**

### **Description:**

Over four years since our society shut down, the fog of COVID remains in our minds, our workplaces, and our culture. Deficits endure as evidenced by escalated rates in depression, anxiety, social development and productivity. The world has changed, and the greatest impact on society since the great depression has left individuals and organizations exhausted in their attempts to find a new normal. During COVID, Patrick and Stephan held weekly webinars with the intention of maintaining human interaction and providing meaning in a dark time. This training will reflect on what we have learned and how we may move forward in the spirit of healing. Topics will include engagement challenges in both the workplace and in treatment, motivational strategies and expanding our insight into meaningful interventions with a focus on resilience. Join us in examining the challenges and opportunities we continue to face, as both private and public entities, while we serve those most impacted by the shutdown.

### **Bio:**

Stephan Stark grew up in the suburbs of New York City (yes, technically New Jersey) and aspired to become a psychologist while in high school. He graduated from the University of Richmond with a major in psychology and went on to study Transpersonal Psychology at Atlantic University while earning a certification in hypnotherapy. Although his early aspirations were to become a practicing psychologist specializing in depth and analysis, synchronicity would have another say. After graduate school, and while working in a group home for behaviorally disordered teens, Stephan found a new focus. Since 1996, he has dedicated himself to helping disadvantaged children and families find meaningful treatment and support; first as a practitioner, and then as an administrator. In this time, Stephan has developed programs and approaches that serve Virginia’s diverse communities with value in mind, and an emphasis on strength-based care. Notably, Stephan established the renowned CARE Approach and StartPoint Program at NCG, as well as numerous other delivery models, to include Northern Virginia's famed CR2 crisis program, which have become the standard for effective and efficient treatment. Stephan has been honored to sit on numerous state work groups and presently resides on the boards of the Central Virginia Partnership on Youth, Virginia Juvenile justice Association, and Virginia Association of Community-based Providers. In addition to development, training and making people laugh, there is nothing he loves more than finding creative and effective ways to serve people and then sharing those success stories. Other than his wife, Rebecca, and his children, Mina and Hayden, this is his greatest joy. Of course, a close third is eating anything in mass quantity. Want to have lunch? We can eat and talk about improving lives.

# STEPHAN STARK & PATRICK SLIFKA



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### **Bio:**

J. Patrick Slifka is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and has provided mental health and addiction treatment in the state of Virginia for over 35 years. His clinical experience includes the delivery of dual diagnosis services in residential, outpatient and community-based settings. Currently he is the Director of Management and Leadership Development for ncgCARE, Mr. Slifka received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from Hampden-Sydney College in 1987 and received his Master of Social Work Degree from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1998. Mr. Slifka has also received a significant amount of post-graduate training on dual diagnosis treatment, sex offender treatment, motivational interviewing, clinical supervision, inhalant abuse, and professional leadership development. He has conducted over 400 statewide trainings to more than 6000 public and private mental health, substance abuse, and criminal justice professionals and is part of NASW-VA’s professional training team. He is a former member of the Board of Directors for Chesterfield County’s Substance Abuse Free Environment (SAFE) and is the past Chairman for the SAFE’s Inhalant and PULP (Proper Use of Legal Products) Task Forces. He was recently awarded the 2020 Virginia Juvenile Justice Association Meritorious Award for Community Service.





## 2025 VENDORS

### VIRGINIA JUVENILE JUSTICE ASSOCIATION TIDEWATER DISTRICT SPRING CONFERENCE

- \* Aetna Better Health of VA-Dori Wingate: [wingate1@aetna.com](mailto:wingate1@aetna.com): 804-514-1017
- \* Cumberland Hospital-Lori Fagan: [lori.fagan@uhsinc.com](mailto:lori.fagan@uhsinc.com): 757-560-7297
- \* Elevate Behavior Health- Donald Edwards: [dedwards@Elevate-BH.com](mailto:dedwards@Elevate-BH.com) 804-905-6855
- \* Elk Hill-Alex Sullivan: [asullivan@elkhill.org](mailto:asullivan@elkhill.org): 804-305-0797
- \* Grafton Integrated Health-Rob Johnson: [robert.johnson@grafton.org](mailto:robert.johnson@grafton.org): 804-836-5484
- \* Hallmark Youthcare-Gail Giese: [gail.giese@hallmarkyouthcare.com](mailto:gail.giese@hallmarkyouthcare.com): 804-690-5537
- \* Harbor Point Behavioral Health Center- Michelle Laskey: [Michelle.Laskey@uhsinc.com](mailto:Michelle.Laskey@uhsinc.com): 757-391-6547
- \* Health Connect America- Amanda Sheppard: [amanda.sheppard@healthconnectamerica.com](mailto:amanda.sheppard@healthconnectamerica.com): 434-907-2966
- \* Hughes Center- Alison Blair: [alison.blair@uhsinc.com](mailto:alison.blair@uhsinc.com): 434-770-2522
- \* Impact Living Services-Deborah Pryor: [deborah.pryor@impactlivingservices.org](mailto:deborah.pryor@impactlivingservices.org): 804-507-5025
- \* Integrated Health Services-Stephanie Cady: [stephaniec@ihsva.com](mailto:stephaniec@ihsva.com): 757-838-1894 X105
- \* Intercept Health-Kyle McMahon: [kemcmahon@intercepthealth.com](mailto:kemcmahon@intercepthealth.com): 804-239-8077
- \* Jackson Field Behavioral Health Services- Nancy Philpy: [nphilpy@jacksonfeild.org](mailto:nphilpy@jacksonfeild.org): 434-634-3217
- \* Lauris Online: David Lewis: [dave@laurisonline.com](mailto:dave@laurisonline.com): 540-342-3669
- \* Liberty Point Behavioral Healthcare-Courtney Evans: [courtney.evans@ushinc.com](mailto:courtney.evans@ushinc.com): 571-361-2412
- \* National Counseling Group-Stephan Stark: [Stephan.Stark@ncgcare.com](mailto:Stephan.Stark@ncgcare.com): 804-314-3604 **\*\*Speaker sponsor**
- \* Piedmont United Family Services-Anthony Dillard: [piedmontunitedservices@gmail.com](mailto:piedmontunitedservices@gmail.com): 757-751-2937
- \* Poplar Springs Hospital-Lemar Taliaferro: [Lemar.taliaferro@hotmail.com](mailto:Lemar.taliaferro@hotmail.com): 804-217-2651
- \* Professional Language Solutions Group- Fari Parmaei: [Fari@pro-LSGroup.com](mailto:Fari@pro-LSGroup.com): 703-828-4467
- \* Rite of Passage-Jennifer Hennessee: [brenay.hall@ROP.com](mailto:brenay.hall@ROP.com): 480-937-9348

- \* **Rivermont Schools-Dominique Pretlow:** [dominique.pretlow@newstory.com](mailto:dominique.pretlow@newstory.com):: 757-207-0415
- \* **Strategic Therapy Associates-Misty Grossman:** [mgrossmand@strategictherapyassociates.com](mailto:mgrossmand@strategictherapyassociates.com): 434-219-5029
- \* **The MARCS Agency-Michael Wiggins:** [michael.wiggins@themarcsagency.com](mailto:michael.wiggins@themarcsagency.com): 804-301-8403
- \* **Three Rivers-Wendi True & Artemis:** [wendi@3rtc.com](mailto:wendi@3rtc.com): 540-849-9829
- \* **Timber Ridge School- Adam Collis:** [collis@trschoool.org](mailto:collis@trschoool.org): 540-888-9524
- \* **UMFS-Brian Chizuk:** [tdemarest@umfs.org](mailto:tdemarest@umfs.org): 757-355-0218
- \* **Virginia Credit Union-Joe Abbatiello:** [Joe.Abbatiello@vacu.org](mailto:Joe.Abbatiello@vacu.org): 540-785-4399
- \* **Virginia Home for Boys and Girls –Christopher Campbell:** [ccampbell@vhbg.org](mailto:ccampbell@vhbg.org): 804-514-9871
- \* **Youth For Tomorrow-Amanda Stone:** [astone@yftva.com](mailto:astone@yftva.com): 804-592-9450



**A BIG THANK YOU  
TO OUR VENDORS  
YOUR SUPPORT ALLOWS US TO  
PROVIDE MEANINGFUL TRAINING  
AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES  
TO OUR MEMBERS**

**WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!!!**