



Office of
Victim Services



Seeking Solutions:
Restorative Justice:
A Survivor-Centric Approach

September 19 –20, 2022 • Albany, NY

OVS Seeking Solutions: *Restorative Justice: A Survivor-Centric Approach*

September 19 – 20, 2022
Albany, NY

The OVS *Seeking Solutions Summit* is a biennial gathering of OVS-funded advocates to learn about a specific topic with the goal of improving their ability to serve victims and survivors of crime in New York State.

This year's summit, ***Restorative Justice: A Survivor-Centric Approach***, will aim to define and outline the key pillars of the term "restorative justice," ensuring that advocates across the state have a firm understanding of the term and can correctly discuss and implement strategies into their practice. Participants will also understand how restorative justice practices have evolved over the years, and where the field is going in the next 5 years.

For up-to-date information on the Summit, please visit ovs.ny.gov/summit.

To register for this training, please [click here](#).

Agenda

Participants will be divided into 2 cohorts (cohort A and cohort B) and will rotate through all 4 breakout sessions throughout the event. Participants will come together for welcome remarks, a special keynote with Chaplain Clementina M. Chéry, and an expert panel discussion. We encourage participants to join us on Day 1 for a networking reception, including light fare food, after the day's events. Please see the full agenda on the following page



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Monday, September 19

1-1:30	Registration	
1:30-2	Opening Remarks	
2-3:30	Breakout Session 1	Group A: <i>Addressing Serious Violence in NYC – Stories from Common Justice</i> Group B: <i>Credible Messengers and Restorative Practices: New Techniques to Heal</i>
3:30-3:45	Break	
3:45-5:15	Breakout Session 2	Group A: <i>Credible Messengers and Restorative Practices: New Techniques to Heal</i> Group B: <i>Addressing Serious Violence in NYC – Stories from Common Justice</i>
5:30-7	Networking Reception	<i>Light fare food will be served.</i>

Tuesday, September 20

7:30-8:30	Breakfast	<i>Breakfast will be served</i>
8:30-10	Keynote Session	Chaplain Clementina Chery
10-10:30	Break	
10:30-Noon	Breakout Session 3	Group A: <i>Incorporating Restorative Practices to Promote a Positive Work Culture and More Successful Outcomes with Clients</i> Group B: <i>Circles for Safe Streets: Empowering Victims of Traffic Violence Through Restorative Justice</i>
Noon-1:30	Lunch	<i>Lunch will be served</i>
1:30-3	Breakout Session 4	Group A: <i>Circles for Safe Streets: Empowering Victims of Traffic Violence Through Restorative Justice</i> Group B: <i>Incorporating Restorative Practices to Promote a Positive Work Culture and More Successful Outcomes with Clients</i>
3-3:15	Break	
3:15-4:45	Expert Panel Discussion	<i>Where do We Go from Here? A Solutions-Focused Discussion About Restorative Practices</i>
4:45-5	Closing Remarks	



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Keynote: Finding Purpose in Pain – a Mother’s Journey
Chaplain Clementina Chéry



Chaplain Chéry’s journey of healing began after her fifteen-year-old son, Louis, a brilliant student, and a peacemaker, was murdered in the crossfire of a shootout in 1993.

With her former husband, she created the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute to honor Louis’ memory in 1994. Louis’s tragic death and the strain of launching the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute, ultimately ended Chaplain Chéry’s marriage, doubling her hurt and pain. And so, she began her personal, professional, and spiritual work to become the architect of her own healing. She was transformed into a messenger of God’s peace.

Chaplain Chéry first attended to her own pain and inner healing. To heal herself, she needed to know who could raise a child that could kill another child. She reached out to, and built a trusting, woman to woman, relationship with Doris, the mother of Charles, the man convicted of killing Louis. Chéry realized that families on both sides of homicide suffer trauma and the impacts of tragedy. Without blame or shame, she and Doris created a plan to ensure that when Charles returned home from prison, both families would have what they needed to live in peace. Chaplain Chéry created the LDB Peace Institute’s model for healing, reconciliation, and accountability, as part of the re-entry process. A successful model for re-entry must include family engagement and community support.

The work of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute is grounded in the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s social-ecological framework. This framework specifies the interventions required at multiple levels to interrupt cycles of violence. The model considers the complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors. It allows us to understand the range of factors that put people at risk for violence as well as those needed to protect them from experiencing or perpetrating violence. The model illustrates how factors at one level influence factors at another level, supporting the Louis D Brown Peace Institute’s vision to create and sustain an environment where all families can live in peace and all people are valued.

Guided by the Seven Principles of Peace: Love, Unity, Faith, Hope, Courage, Justice, and Forgiveness, Chaplain Chéry and the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute are creating healing spaces for families and communities impacted on both sides of murder and working to transform society’s response to homicide. Her innovative, holistic, healing work does not rely on traditional criminal law concepts of restorative justice. Rather, it is organically based in the Principles of Peace, the values and culture of her community. The community she serves.



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Day 1 Sessions – September 19, 2022

Addressing Serious Violence in NYC – Stories from Common Justice

Olapeju Oyeyemi, Assistant Director for Trauma Support Bronx/Brooklyn, Common Justice

Cesare Robinson, Common Justice

Jessica Peñaranda, Common Justice

In this presentation you will hear from Common Justice staff who are leading restorative justice work with those harmed by serious violence (harmed parties) as well as those who have committed the violence (responsible parties) throughout NYC. Through the sharing of experiences and perspectives, and discussion with participants, this presentation seeks to deepen our shared understandings of what it means to practice restorative justice in this context, including what it means to be victim-centered in this work.

Credible Messengers and Restorative Practices: New Techniques to Heal

Lindsay Acker, Program and Case Coordinator, Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition

La'Tryse Anderson, SNUG

Dina Thompson, Executive Director, Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition

An alternative school for high-risk youth began to use restorative practices but struggled to engage youth. Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition partnered with their local SNUG outreach team to engage members as credible messengers to lead circles and thus increase buy in from youth. This panel will focus on how teams were trained and then employed to engage youth and systems.



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Day 2 Sessions – September 20, 2022

Incorporating Restorative Practices to Promote a Positive Work Culture and More Successful Outcomes with Clients

Liza Ochsendorf, Director of Employment & Training, Warren County, NY

Supervisors/Agency Leaders will learn some basic restorative practices to use in the workplace and with clients. The shift in the culture of the agency will make restorative practices a norm that then trickles down throughout programs and services. Restorative practices can be used to problem solve with employees as well as with clients, therefore promoting a stronger sense of community and equal voice. Participants will learn how to facilitate different types of circles with staff, clients, and youth. They will also learn how restorative practices build effective communication skills, create buy in and ownership, self-awareness and accountability, encourages solution-oriented dialogue, and builds confidence and security in individual and group dynamics. Finally, participants will also learn how restorative practices provides understanding and closure to all parties of an incident or situation. With closure and understanding, it reduces cycle of shame behaviors for victims and offenders.

Circles for Safe Streets: Empowering Victims of Traffic Violence Through Restorative Justice

Robin Middleman Filepp, Member of Families for Safe Streets

Hillary Packer, Associate Director of Restorative Practices, Center for Court Innovation

Chana Widawski, LMSW, Senior Organizer, Transportation Alternatives

This session will share an overview of an innovative pilot program, Circles for Safe Streets, a pilot project of the Center for Court Innovation (CCI) in partnership with Families for Safe Streets (FSS). Circles for Safe Streets (CSS) provides a restorative justice response to vehicular crimes resulting in serious injury or death. The process gives voice to the hundreds of victims and their loved ones whose lives are lost or permanently altered due to traffic violence on NYC streets, while requiring drivers to confront the harm they have caused and work towards preventing such harm from reoccurring in the future.

Panelists will include at least one representative from CCI, along with at least one FSS member who has participated in CSS. The panel will describe the planning process undertaken jointly between the two organizations: CCI, a justice reform nonprofit, and FSS, a group of members who have been directly impacted by traffic violence. This process included a series of listening sessions with individuals who experienced serious injury or loss of life due to vehicular violence, and with drivers who were responsible for causing such harm. Nearly universally, victims described the legal system's shortcomings in providing them a sense of justice or accountability, or to meet their unique needs. In addition, drivers who cause this level of harm experience their own trauma in the aftermath of a crash. Through restorative justice, CSS seeks to address these issues by providing support to both victims and defendants individually, as well as a pathway of accountability for drivers that requires them to confront the harm they have caused and to work towards preventing this harm from reoccurring in the future.

At the start of the process, victims are given the opportunity to meet with FSS members for group and 1:1 support, as well as work with an FSS social worker who can help to meet immediate needs, provide ongoing support and case management. The CSS process culminates in an accountability circle, in which the victim(s) (or victim representatives) have an opportunity to convey the life-changing impact of the crash on their lives,



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ask questions of the driver, potentially feel some solace from hearing expressions of remorse from drivers. Drivers take responsibility for the harm they caused by coming face-to-face with those they have impacted, telling the truth of what happened, apologizing, expressing remorse, and committing to how they can work to prevent future harm. As a result of participating in the program, drivers may receive a reduction in criminal charges, a reduction in jail or prison time, or diversion from incarceration entirely.

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

1. Understand and explain how restorative justice can be used to enhance victim voice.
2. Explain one way that restorative justice is being used in the court setting.
3. Gain a better understanding of the unique kind of victimization that results from traffic violence.

Day 2 Expert Panel

Where Do We Go from Here? A Solutions-Focused Discussion About Restorative Practices

Panelists:

Chaplain Clementina Chéry, Co-Founder and CEO, *Louis D. Brown Peace Institute*

Afua Afriya-Fullwood, Former Bronx Legal Aid Attorney

Rawaa Nancy Albilal, President and CEO, *Arab-American Family Support Center*

Alice J. Rudnick, MPA, Principal Analyst, *NYS Unified Court System Office of Alternative Dispute Resolution*

Danny Salim, Deputy Director of Solution Based Casework, *Arab-American Family Support Center*

Quentin Walcott, Co-Executive Director, *CONNECT*; *national and international anti-violence activist*

[Click here to register](#)
