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from mac's executive director

Dear MAC Members and Friends:

On February 9, 2021, we witnessed a senseless act of gun violence in Buffalo,

Minnesota that caused the death of tragic one person, injured four more, and terrorized and traumatized an entire community. In the immediate hours and days that followed, MAC staff, board members, and member programs focused on supporting our Wright County colleagues and member programs, and those they were valiantly supporting. I am proud of how the MAC community came together to provide resources, media response, and support in any way we could.

The immediate priority for direct service advocates and criminal legal professionals after tragedy like the one in Buffalo is crisis intervention and ensuring procedures are followed so to not jeopardize any part of a pending criminal case. The advocates, first responders, prosecutors, and others involved in immediate response are often impacted by these traumatic event and experienced vicarious trauma as they listen to and hold the stories of those who were at the center of the event as they unfolded. In order to do their jobs, professionals often compartmentalize feelings, images, sounds, and other things associated with the event itself. We ask a lot of these professionals and we owe them a debt of gratitude.

As the days and weeks have passed since the Buffalo shooting, the need for resources and ongoing support has not diminished. There are individuals who are just now beginning to unpack the trauma experienced on February 9th and the following days. MAC staff and board are committed to being here to offer whatever we can to assist those navigating this journey.

MAC is working on the development of a mass casualty event resource page on our website so that these resources can be access immediately and as needed. There are best practice toolkits that have been developed in other states that we will provide access to, as well as development of Minnesota-specific resources, including information on working with the media. We hope to have this page up and resources available to access within the next few weeks. If any of you have resources that you think should be included, please reach out to me or Danielle Kluz.

Our hearts and thoughts continue to be with those most by the Buffalo shooting. The MAC community will continue to stay close and offer whatever assistance may be of use to our members and allies.

In Peace,

**Bobbi Holtberg** 



# **Cultural Self-Awareness, Cultural Humility, and Cultural Self-Study**

Julia Tindell, Minnesota Alliance on Crime

Six months ago I was introduced to the idea of cultural self-study by the <u>Cultural Wellness Center</u> (CWC) in Minneapolis. During a class on community health and engagement, Brother Minkara Tezet invited me into the practice of researching myself, my Ancestors, and my culture in community with others and with the guidance of elders. I began studying with Elders Sara, Janice, and Craig at the organization <u>Healing Roots</u>, where MAC staff



are currently participating in a European American Identity and Culture Workshop. Since then, I have been working to deepen my understanding of Healing Roots' **four areas of study** (the dynamics of culture, the history of whiteness, European American culture, and European "root" cultures).

I have come to understand that the <a href="https://example.com/history-of-constructing-whiteness">history-of-constructing-whiteness</a> has serious implications for how we contribute to the end of structural racism, as individuals and as people working within systems. Through the process of self-study, I have begun to reconnect to my <a href="mailto:root-cultures">root-cultures</a> and better understand what it looks like to create and honor space for other cultural ways of knowing. I have also been able to expand my idea of <a href="mailto:what-racist-culture-could-look-and-feel-like">what anti-racist-culture-could-look-and-feel-like</a>, an experience that feels powerful and hopeful.

One of the most important lessons I have learned is that <u>I have a culture</u>. As a European American, I was taught that my ways of living and experiencing the world are *normal*. This attitude has shut my eyes to the myriad ways people interact with the world, including how people experience and process victimization, trauma, and healing. This way of thinking dominates the field of victim services. One obvious example is how we classify some services as "culturally specific." I would submit that most advocacy programs are "culturally specific" in that they exist within and are often designed to serve European American people, with practices grounded in mainstream American culture.

I do not mean to suggest that European American culture is inherently bad. However, if we can do the work to identify characteristics of European American culture, we will be better equipped to recognize cultural differences and respect and honor different cultural ways of knowing and being. For example, a well-known characteristic of mainstream American culture is the emphasis on timeliness: being on time, meeting deadlines, and sticking to schedules. This characteristic has a lot of value. Sticking to schedules is an important way that advocates set boundaries and engage in trauma stewardship practices. Deadlines can help to keep work moving forward, and respecting meeting times can help us make the most of precious hours advocates need to do their essential work. So, what's the problem?

Problems arise when we assume that this perspective on time is *normal* rather than accepting that it is *cultural*. Failing to acknowledge this difference may result in miscommunication of expectations for both victims and advocates. It can also lead to the classification of some victims as unreliable, problematic, or uncooperative. There are many cultural differences that can result in misunderstanding, miscommunication, and conflict. When we frame one cultural practice (such as arriving on time) as *good*, *healthy*, *and normal* and other cultural practices (such as arriving late to appointments) as *bad*, *unhealthy*, *and deviant*, we do a grave disservice to victims, risking our relationships and reducing our capacity to provide truly supportive services.

In fact, communication and conflict styles are a major source of misunderstanding. According to the Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory, European American culture tends to value direct, emotionally restrained conflict styles. In contrast, African American culture tends to value direct but emotionally expressive styles, while Native American cultures often value indirect but emotionally restrained styles. If European Americans assume that emotionally restrained communication is the most normal, the healthiest, and the best form of conflict style, they may wrongfully accuse emotionally expressive African Americans as being too aggressive. Meanwhile, African Americans may see European Americans' emotional restraint as cold and unfeeling. When we approach different conflict styles with cultural self-awareness and cultural humility, we are better able to recognize and build bridges between cultural differences. These skills make us better advocates, better co-workers, and better community partners.

Cultural self-study, cultural self-awareness, and cultural humility are vital if we want our agencies to be safe, supportive, and healing to *all* victims of crime. Now, like Brother Minkara and the elders at Healing Roots, I would like to invite you into a process of cultural self-study. The Cultural Wellness Center and Healing Roots are excellent places to start seeking out resources. The CWC especially focuses on resources for African Americans to deepen their connections to their root cultures, while Healing Roots works primarily with European Americans. We're also planning to have conversations about how MAC can deepen our anti-racist work at our upcoming regional meetings. I hope you'll join us at the meetings and in this work.



**Northern Minnesota** 

Wednesday, April 7: 1:00 to 4:00 pm

**Central Minnesota** 

Tuesday, April 13: 9 am to noon

**Twin Cities Metro** 

Thursday, April 22: 9 am to noon

**Southern Minnesota** 

Wednesday, April 28: 1:00 to 4:00 pm

All MAC members are welcome to join us. Mark your calendars.

More information and registration coming soon!



Is your organization a whirlwind of change at the moment? Are you overwhelmed or anxious by COVID-19? Are you having a <u>lot</u> of feelings right now? Do you just need to talk and laugh with other MAC members?

If any of the above resonate with you, join the Minnesota Alliance on Crime for a weekly free gathering on Zoom to share, network, vent, laugh, and **connect** with your fellow members and MAC staff.

#### All MAC members are welcome to join us!

#### March 3, 2021 Discussion:

• Join us as we talk about our personal and work lives - individually and collectively. How is your personal life? How is your work life? What has been challenging? How are you taking care of yourself? How can we all help each other?

Please note that to increase your safety and privacy, all registrations now are handled through the Zoom website and all registrations are personally approved by MAC staff members. MAC will never post information online about joining the meeting.

Wednesday, March 3, 2021 from Noon to 1:00 pm.

**Questions? Contact Danielle.** 

Register today!

## news from the field

# ABAJournal: 6 Tips from Infectious Disease Experts for In-person Court Proceedings

As the pandemic began to rage across America last spring, U.S. District of Maryland Chief Judge James K. Bredar puzzled over how to mount in-person hearings. The judge quickly realized he needed the help of a public health expert. He turned to epidemiologist Dr. Jonathan M. Zenilman, a professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. He invited Zenilman to his Baltimore courthouse, so the doctor could see firsthand the challenges they were facing. Later, Zenilman and three other infectious disease experts convened with federal judges from around the country to address their concerns. The result is a 15-page summary report of the group's policy recommendations. Zenilman describes it as a set of "best practices" to guide attorneys, judges and court staff. **Read more**.

# Men and Masculine Folks Network: Apply Now for the 2021 Community Leadership Institute

We invite 18-30 year old men and masculine folks to apply for this year-long community leadership course, where you'll learn foundational concepts in social justice, healing work, and practical skills. **Apply now!** Deadline to apply: 3/5/2021

# National Crime Victim Law Institute: COVID-19 Resources for Legal Services and Victims' Rights

In light of the impact of COVID-19 on services for victims, NCVLI is compiling a list of resources for legal service providers. This list is not intended to be, nor can it be complete. We will work to update it regularly as we learn new information. **Read now**.

# National District Attorneys Association: Creating a Trauma-informed Court Environment

Many people who come in contact with the justice system, whether as a court employee, attorney, witness or defendant, have experienced trauma or profound grief and loss. Trauma is much more common than people think. Although trauma is traditionally associated with military personnel, trauma incidents can occur throughout everyday life. **Read more**.

# National Institute of Corrections and the National Crime Victim Law Institute: Recommendations for Practice: Post-Conviction Victims' Rights and Services

In 2017, the National Institute of Corrections issued a Post-Conviction Victim Service Legal Issues RFP to delve into the current post-conviction landscape and identify the gaps and opportunities related to interagency collaboration in order to improve victims' rights compliance and enforcement post-conviction. The National Crime Victim Law Institute applied for and was awarded the project. The project design brought together a multi-disciplinary group of experts to analyze existing rights and services, identify gaps and opportunities for interagency collaboration, and draft a set of recommendations to assist jurisdictions in the development of systems to improve rights compliance and implementation of integrated trauma-informed services post-conviction. **This pape**r is the product of project efforts.

# National Resource Center for Reaching Victims: Supporting Deaf and DeafBlind Survivors

Many mainstream hearing programs want to serve Deaf survivors, but are often unaware of the unique experiences and cultural values of Deaf survivors and are not prepared to provide sign language interpretation. The Vera Institute of Justice has created a series of videos about Deaf and DeafBlind culture, best practices for working with Deaf and DeafBlind survivors, and how to find qualified interpreters. There is also a panel discussion highlighting key factors that contributed to a successful partnership between a hearing and Deaf organization. Click for more info and to watch videos.

Office for Victims of Crime: 2021 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Resource

#### Guide

The 2021 National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) Resource Guide artwork is now available online to help your organization plan its public awareness activities in advance of, and during NCVRW. NCVRW will be commemorated April 18–24, 2021. These materials were designed to help inspire your community and raise awareness of victims' rights. Use the **2021 NCVRW artwork** to help your organization promote NCVRW and this year's NCVRW theme—Support Victims. Build Trust. Engage Communities.

# The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center and the National Crime Victim Law Institute (NCVLI): Restitution Resource Center

<u>The Restitution Resource Center</u> will help states improve their ability to effectively order, collect, disburse, and fulfill restitution sentences. The center, supported by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime, will facilitate peer networks and information exchange as well as provide a central hub for best practices and successful innovations in the field.

# The Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University: Online Dialogue on Black Women and Criminal (In)Justice

<u>Black Women and Criminal (In)justice: Missing Voices in the U.S. Incarceration Conversation</u> is a dialogue where five women discussed how gender, race, and politics impact Black women's involvement with and experience in the U.S. criminal justice system. You may view the recording of the dialogue here and you can also view a list of articles and other <u>resources for this dialogue</u>.

#### The Voices and Faces Project: Call for Poetry Submissions

The Louder Together team at <u>The Voices and Faces Project</u>, an award-winning non-profit storytelling project and testimonial writing program, is joining with the Rural Women's Collective Fellows at Justice for Migrant Women to solicit poetry submissions that speak to the statement "I Am Rural America." We are seeking poetry that helps us shine a light on outdated notions of who represents rural America. We seek especially to elevate the writing of Black, Brown and Indigenous persons, and other communities of color, whose stories are too often disappeared in conversations about rural populations. <u>Learn more</u>.

## **Submit Your Proposal for the 2021 OJP "UN-Conference"**

There is still time to submit your proposal for the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Justice Programs **33rd Annual Conference on Crime and Victimization** to be held virtually May 17-20 and May 24-27, 2021. Proposals will be accepted until Friday, March 5, 2021.

Present and participate in a training experience organized in an un-conventional way! Topics will span the wide range of crime victimization and issues related to responding to crime victims in unusual and uncertain times.

What is an "un-conference?" It is a like a regular conference, but we've lifted all the pressure and expectation to attend each session. While a handful of topical ideas for proposals are listed on **the abstract form**, the agenda will be driven by the proposals we actually receive. Like other conferences, we'll carve out time for unstructured and informal spaces to connect and engage with our presenters and OJP staff members.

The event will be 100% virtual, safely accessible and free of charge. All the event information is available and updated to the **OJP Training and Communications page**, found on the DPS/OJP website.

upcoming trainings & webinars



The Annual Zero Abuse Project Summit is VIRTUAL this year and accessible to all front-line child abuse professionals no matter where you are located.

Join Victor Vieth, Rita Farrell, and other national investigative child protection experts as the 2021 Zero Abuse Project Summit explores emerging issues in forensic interviewing, investigation, and prosecution.

Learn more and register.

### **Other Trainings and Webinars**

#### **COVID-19 and Scams**

Sponsored by the Minnesota Elder Justice Center

Webinar | March 4, 2021 | 1:00 pm

As the pandemic progresses and the vaccine offers the promise of better days, scammers are doing what they always do – using the headlines to steal money and personal information from anyone they can victimize. Some new scams focus on the vaccine and pandemic, while others that seem like the "oldest trick in the book" have new power in our ongoing crisis. The steps for all of us to guard against financial loss for ourselves and loved ones remain the same, but may require new vigilance while we face the pandemic's challenges. **Learn more**.

# An Examination of AfroLatin@s in the Latino Community Sponsored by the National Latin@ Network

Webinar | March 10, 2021 | Noon to 1:00 pm

This webinar will focus on the lived realities of the AfroLatina diaspora and the resiliency in the face of violence and various issues facing communities. Yvette will share her experience and learnings from the field to support survivors of violence staring with centering the experiences of AfroLatinas in Latin America and their experiences as immigrants within the context of the U.S. This webinar will explore the importance of both ethnic and racial identity within the Latino community. **Learn more**.

# **Introduction to Restorative Justice Diversion Sponsored by Impact Justice**

Webinar | March 10, 2021 | 12:30 pm

Join Impact Justice for an introduction to the Restorative Justice Project's unique model of pre-charge restorative justice diversion. You'll learn how it works, the core elements of the program and what kinds of outcomes our pilot sites have seen. This webinar is ideal for those who are already familiar with the concepts of restorative justice and are interested in learning how it can be used to address harm. <a href="Learnmore"><u>Learnmore</u></a>.

#### **Financial Exploitation Investigations**

**Sponsored by the Minnesota Elder Justice Center** 

Webinar | March 11, 2021 | 1:00 pm

In this presentation we will take a deeper look into the tools and models used in determining if financial exploitation has occurred and review her approaches and organizational and analytical techniques when diving into these complex investigations. **Learn more**.

#### **Suicide Prevention and Intervention for Victim Advocates**

Sponsored by the Office on Victims of Crime

Webinar | March 17, 2021 | Noon to 2:00 pm

This webinar will provide an overview of the importance of suicide prevention activities within victim services and introduce the EDC H.O.P.E. handbook. The handbook is an important resource for

advocates, and it includes a guide designed for those working in tribal communities specifically. The webinar will demonstrate tools to prepare crime victim advocates to identify victims who are exhibiting symptoms of suicidality, present how to do a brief intervention and where to make referrals for clinical mental health services, and share how to provide ongoing support to victims. **Learn more**.

#### The Growing Pains of Ageism Sponsored by the Minnesota Elder Justice Center Webinar | March 25, 2021 | 1:00 pm

Let's talk together about how ageism – which is discrimination against our future selves -- impacts how we think about ourselves and interact with others. Sally Brown and Pat Samples, who lead core programs in Minnesota's Vital Aging Network, will guide our discussion about how harmful ideas, behaviors and practices result from misconceptions and biases about older people. We will also consider the life-extending benefits that result from cultivating positive views toward our own aging and among people we serve. Learn more.

## employment opportunities

Resources for job seekers:

**Association of Minnesota Counties Jobs** 

Indeed

**Legal Services State Support Positions Available** 

**Minnesota Council of Nonprofits Job Board** 

Minnesota County Attorney's Association Job Bank

#### contact us

As always, if you have any suggestions for MAC, we welcome your input!

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www.mnallianceoncrime.org

## about the minnesota alliance on crime

The Minnesota Alliance on Crime connects systems, service providers, and victims to advance the response for victims of all crime. MAC is a membership coalition of more than 90 crime victim service providers in Minnesota, including prosecution-based victim/witness programs, community programs, law enforcement agencies, and individuals committed to supporting crime victims. We support our membership through training, technical assistance, resources, public policy and legislative initiatives, and

networking opportunities.

For more information about MAC, go to <a href="www.mnallianceoncrime.org">www.mnallianceoncrime.org</a>.

To join our coalition of crime victim service programs, <u>click here</u>.