

The National Human Trafficking and Disabilities Working Group (NHTDWG) Steering Committee 2023



Jody Haskin

Jody Haskin (she/her/hers) is the Executive Director at IOFA. Jody has worked to support and lead various anti-trafficking programs for IOFA since 2013. Jody led the Training and Technical Assistance initiative funded through the Department of Justice Office on Violence against Women to provide training and resources to youth-serving organizations throughout the United States for five years. She currently oversees three programs funded through the Office on Victims of Crime (OVC), including a mentoring program for youth served through child welfare who have experienced trafficking, a trainings for law enforcement on working with individuals with disabilities who have experienced trafficking, and the Westchester County Anti-Trafficking Task Force.

Jody is a founding member and steering committee member of the National Human Trafficking and Disabilities Working Group (NHTDWG) where she supervises the administration and coordination of the group. Jody is a co-leader of the Chicago Collaboration on Trafficking of Youth with Disabilities and has led and contributed to anti-trafficking training programs within the disability community in Chicago and throughout the U.S. Jody's work also includes developing resources and increasing capacity for youth-serving organizations to respond effectively to sex and labor trafficking. Jody has trained both professionals and community leaders on the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSE) and child labor trafficking through the Asian American Trafficking Outreach Project (AATOP) in Chicago, and has contributed to curricula and handbook development to guide child welfare professionals in identifying and responding to child trafficking for the New York Office of Children and Family Services. Jody earned her MA in International Human Rights from the Josef Korbel School of International Studies (JKSIS) where she was a member of the Human Trafficking Center. Jody's foundation of her passion for social justice stems from her education at Western Michigan University where she earned her Bachelor of Social Work.

Justice Shorter

Justice Shorter is a Disability Justice advocate and Black Disabled Lives Matter amplifier. She is a national expert on disability inclusive disaster protections, emergency management and humanitarian crises/conflicts. As a youth journalist in 2005, Justice began writing professionally on topics related to community development, humanitarian affairs and youth empowerment. Driven to action by these issues, she has studied community development in South Africa, Peace & Post-Conflict Reconciliation in Uganda/Rwanda, periodically returned to her childhood community to teach on subjects surrounding social action/communications and earned a B.A. in Journalism with minors in Justice & Peace Studies from Marquette University.

While earning her MA in Sustainable Development: International Policy & Management, Justice authored three separate inclusion guides for the U.S. State Department and produced multiple people-centered projects via internships with The Hunger Project, World Learning and Women Enabled International. Justice also interned within the White House Office of Public Engagement & Intergovernmental Affairs where she focused on disability outreach efforts, social inclusion policies and federal agency engagement.

In more recent years, Justice served as a Disability Integration Advisor with the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency, deploying frequently to disaster areas across America and its territories. She is also the co-creator of a celebrated framework for applying Disability Justice approaches to disaster assistance, an Emergency Management method that acknowledges histories of harm, centers intersectionality and prioritizes leadership by Black, Indigenous & People Of Color with disabilities. As a currier and curator of work at the nexus of Disability Justice, Racial Justice & Gender Justice, she is a sought-after facilitator/speaker for organizations within movement spaces nationwide. With a steadfast commitment to international development and inclusive humanitarian assistance, Justice continues to participate in ongoing projects as a global advisor and trainer.

In addition to her role as an Adjunct Faculty Member at Tulane University's Disaster Leadership Academy, Justice is currently the National Disaster Protection Advisor for the National Disability Rights Network where she advises the fifty-seven federally mandated Protection & Advocacy agencies on any issues related to pandemics, fires, disasters and other emergencies.

Dr. Melanie Cross, HEAL Trafficking

Check back later for bio.

Mónica Arenas

Mónica Arenas is a Program Manager at Futures Without Violence, working on the Learning and Leadership Project. Ms. Arenas has participated in the development and implementation of training programs and technical assistance on: human trafficking multidisciplinary collaborations to assist survivors of human trafficking; organizational sustainability of organizations working on gender based violence; training and partnerships with international programs; and immigrant survivor leadership development. She also helped in the production of the Latina leadership manual “Breaking the Silence: Training Manual for Activists, Advocates and Latina Organizers,” as well as several other publications. Mónica is a member of the National Human Trafficking and Disabilities Working Group.

Sandra Harrell

Sandra Harrell is the Associate Director of Vera Institute of Justice’s Center on Victimization and Safety and her work focuses on helping individuals, organizations and communities across the country address violence against adults and children with disabilities. She oversees a variety of projects, including a federally funded program that helps communities across the United States improve their response to women with disabilities and Deaf women who have experiences domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking. Sandra has worked closely with the 85 communities funded by the Office on Violence Against Women’s Disability Grant Program, helping them to build multi-disciplinary collaborations to address the gaps within and between their systems to ensure that survivors with disabilities get the support they need. Additionally, Sandra leads Vera’s efforts to address sexual abuse of children with disabilities and Deaf children, and serves as an internal advisor to all projects focused on the intersection of disability and violence. She has also delivered trainings on violence against women with disabilities at multiple venues across the country, co-authored reports on the topic, and coordinated roundtables and meetings to expand the field.

Sandra began working in the anti-violence against women movement in 1990 working on her local crisis line and volunteering at the local domestic violence shelter. In 1996, Sandra was hired to work for Turning Point Battered Women’s Shelter in Alexandria, Louisiana where she served as an advocate for battered women and rape survivors, providing individual support, group counseling, court advocacy, and hospital escorts. She pursued her Master’s degree in Women’s Studies to more fully explore gender-based violence and obtained her degree from Goddard College in 2000. Shortly

thereafter, Sandra was hired as the Project Director for Vanderbilt University's Grant to Reduce Violence Crimes Against Women on Campuses where she provided education to students, faculty and staff on the topics of sexual violence, domestic violence and stalking. In 2005, she accepted a position at the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault where she worked on Project Access, an initiative that introduced her to complex barriers faced by survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors. She then joined Vera in 2006 to continue the work of improving services for survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors. Since 2006, Sandra has worked within over 150 communities to build collaborations between disability organizations and victim services organizations, helping them to create innovative solutions to complex issues that emerge at the intersection of victimization and disability.

Susan Kahan, MA, LCPC

As a member of the clinical staff at the University of Illinois at Chicago's Institute on Disability and Human Development, Susan provides individual and group therapy for children through adults on a broad range of mental health, developmental and behavioral concerns, specializing in Autism and trauma. Susan provides consultation on disability-related topics including trauma and trauma-informed care, sexual abuse prevention, and sexuality and healthy relationships, and training around the country for trauma centers, disability agencies, professionals, schools, and families. She is a certified Forensic Interviewer and serves as disability case consultant for the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center and its clinicians, victim advocates, law enforcement, child protective services and Illinois State's Attorney's Office representatives. In addition, Susan is a CIT instructor for the Cook County Sheriff's Bureau of Education and Training and provides training on disability for Chicago Police Department new detectives. Susan presents nationally on topics related to disability and trauma, human trafficking, and sexual abuse prevention and intervention.

Ali Chiu

Ali Chiu has been a public service provider since 1999. Her focus has been on anti-violence (domestic violence, gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, & human trafficking). She also has been an advocate on issues relating to seniors and people with disabilities. She is currently the Lead Supervisor of Consultative Services at Institute on Aging of San Francisco and is also a Steering Committee member of the National Human Trafficking and Disabilities Working Group.