



**New York State Coalition
Against Sexual Assault**
Believing. Healing. Preventing.

2021 Annual Report



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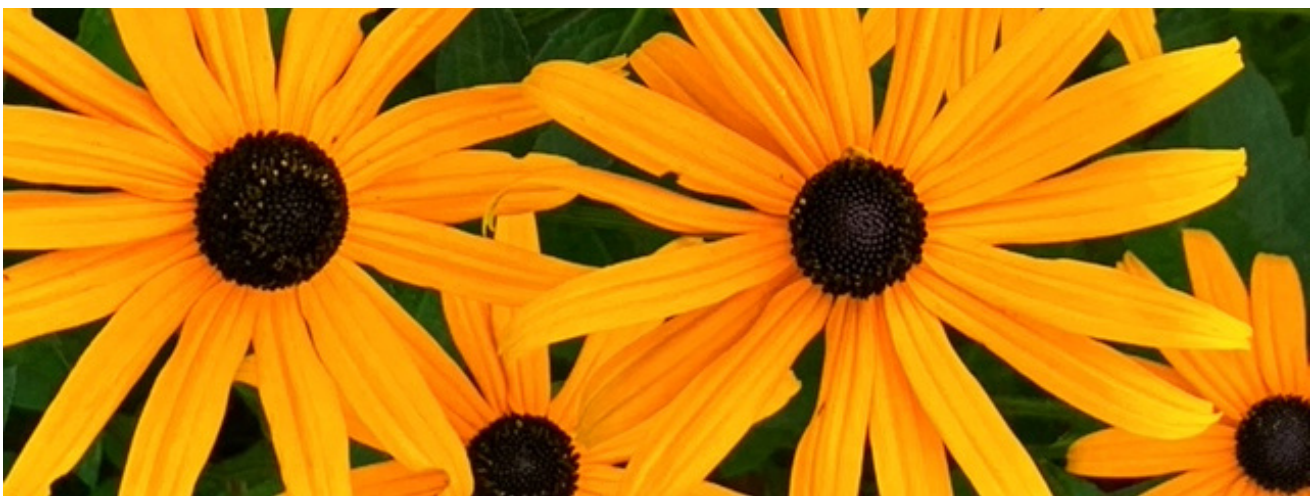


MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What a year 2021 turned out to be! We faced the ongoing COVID pandemic, the Great Resignation, and a wide range of current events demonstrating power abuses of every kind. Times were difficult, with disproportionate impacts on people in historically marginalized communities. People evaluated every aspect of their lives and often made big changes (in where they work, live, and more). Survivors' needs increased in number and complexity. The advocacy field experienced a workforce crisis due to low salaries/benefits and high levels of job-related stress. An abundance of opportunities tested our resilience and urged our efforts at transformation. Our commitment to addressing sexual violence and other forms of oppression—along with uplifting the needs of survivors and the advocates who support them—remained strong.

The main function of our organization is to build capacity—a feat that is challenging during a long period of circumstances that wear away at optimal functioning. Nevertheless, we passed through grant funding to our community-based rape crisis programs to deliver services to vulnerable populations. We collaborated meaningfully with partners to deliver training and technical assistance focused on meeting the needs of culturally specific groups. We worked with programs outside our traditional network of providers to strengthen support services for sexual assault survivors. We advocated for policies that more broadly addressed the needs of people affected by sexual violence and exploitation. We convened a cohort for service providers that focused on vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, and burnout at one of the most crucial times in our field's history. We moved our offices into a new space that reflects our evolving ways of working. In short, we figured out how to get through 2021, with our hope intact for continued growth and positive developments in the coming year.

—Joanne Zannoni, Executive Director



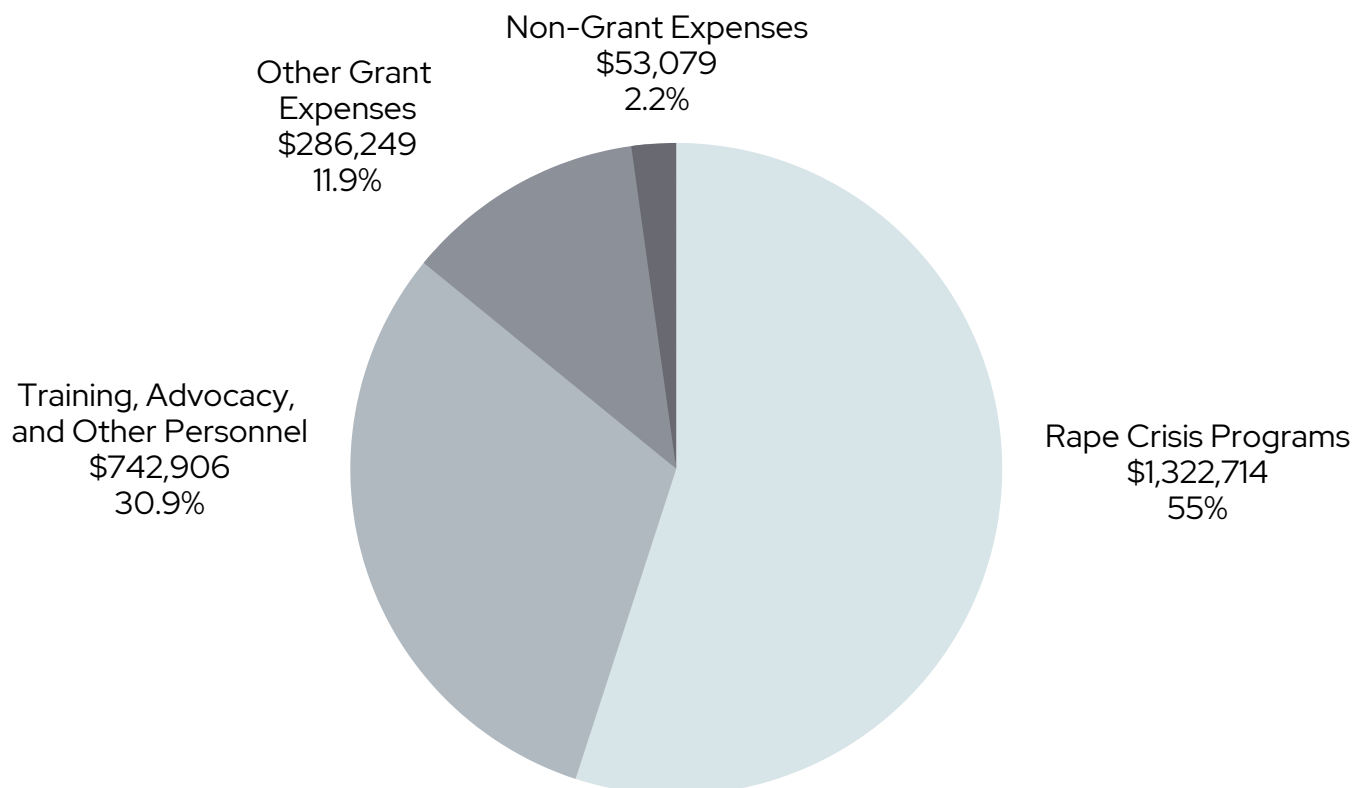
2021 EXPENSE SUMMARY

In 2021, NYSCASA awarded a total of **\$1,322,714** to rape crisis programs providing core services, direct intervention, and related assistance to victims and survivors of sexual assault throughout New York State.

Rape crisis program services include, but are not limited to, 24-hour sexual assault hotlines; crisis intervention services; accompaniment and advocacy during encounters with medical, criminal justice, civil justice, and other social support systems; information and referrals; short-term individual and group support counseling; and culturally specific services, including outreach activities to unserved and underserved populations.

NYSCASA's Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) awarded **more than \$648,000** to 45 rape crisis programs to provide direct services to victims and survivors of sexual assault.

Through the NYS PREA Partnership, NYSCASA awarded **more than \$748,000** to 10 rape crisis programs providing direct services to victims and survivors incarcerated in New York State. Learn more about this program on **page 9**.



TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

NYSCASA supports a network of more than 80 rape crisis programs and allied survivor-supporting professionals across New York State, offering in-depth and comprehensive training and technical assistance to help them best address the needs of sexual violence survivors.

2021 Technical Assistance Topics

- Peer support and healing spaces for victim advocates who identify as Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color
- Peer support and learning exchanges about centering racial justice in the work to address sexual violence
- Peer learning exchanges focused on maintaining and strengthening primary prevention efforts throughout the COVID-19 pandemic
- Victim/survivor notification regarding updates from sexual assault forensic exams
- Providing crisis services to minors
- Rape crisis counselor confidentiality
- Child Victims Act
- Safe Way Home Act
- Bail and discovery reform
- Victim assistance program referrals
- Abusive partner intervention program referrals
- Integrating transformative justice values into survivor/victim support work
- Vicarious trauma in survivor-supporting professionals
- Cultural safety, humility, and competency

2021 Training Topics

- Onboarding resources for new "Enough Is Enough" advocates
- Sexual Assault Service Program (SASP) grant administration
- Using the NY Crime Victims Legal Help online resource to support survivors
- Using Safe Stays, a hotel booking platform created by ReloShare, to secure safe shelter for survivors
- Using Vela, a data collection and reporting software created by Element 74
- Community engagement and outreach rooted in relationship building and cultural humility
- Centering the experiences of Indigenous survivors of state violence and sexual violence
- Efforts to support criminalized and incarcerated survivors and end the criminalization of survival
- Creating healing opportunities for survivors through storytelling, ritual, and retreat spaces
- Using media literacy education to promote sexual and relationship health and prevent sexual violence on campus
- Circles of Safety sexual abuse prevention curriculum from Stop It Now!
- Mitigating the effects of vicarious trauma on survivor-supporting professionals

2021 VISIONARY VOICE AWARDS

Each April, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center offers the Visionary Voice Awards, in conjunction with Sexual Assault Awareness Month, to recognize the creativity and hard work of individuals around the country who have demonstrated outstanding work to end sexual violence. State, territory, and tribal coalitions select an outstanding individual or organization to nominate for the awards.

NYSCASA is pleased to honor our friends at the Visioning B.E.A.R. Circle Intertribal Coalition (VBCIC), a survivor-led organization that provides prevention education, training, and technical assistance to Indigenous and multicultural communities who wish to eliminate interpersonal violence in their communities.

The acronym B.E.A.R. stands for “balance, equality, and respect.” VBCIC works to make child sexual abuse and all forms of violence unthinkable through a cultural shift that incorporates Indigenous traditions and values that have existed before, despite, and in spite of colonization. VBCIC leverages an understanding of historical trauma and systemic oppression to develop intervention, healing, and prevention strategies.

Building on years of successful violence prevention work, VBCIC created a child sexual abuse prevention curriculum titled, “Walking in Balance with All Our Relations.” Featuring thirteen modules based on Indigenous values and traditions, the curriculum provides historical perspective; promotes fundamental structural change; and includes the healing and treatment of those who have done harm as a key piece of primary prevention.

Learn more about VBCIC at visioningbear.org.



SEXUAL ASSAULT DEMONSTRATION INITIATIVE (SADI)

NYSCASA's Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative (SADI) provides selected organizations serving sexual violence survivors across New York State an opportunity to receive specialized training, technical assistance, and resources in three cohorts:

- Enhancing sexual violence advocacy services
- Strengthening prevention activities
- Mitigating vicarious trauma for advocates and service providers



We welcomed our first SADI cohort in March 2021, embarking on a journey of reflection and transformation alongside the following participants:

- Arab-American Family Support Center
- Barrier-Free Living
- Center for Safety & Change, Inc.
- Crisis Services
- Legal Services of the Hudson Valley
- Policy Research International, Inc.
- SEPA Mujer, Inc.
- Vera House, Inc.
- Wellspring
- Westchester Medical Center SAAVE Program

Throughout 2021, each cohort, which consists of leadership staff and frontline staff at participating organizations, engaged in internal and community assessments to identify areas of strength and possibilities for improvement and growth.

The "Mitigating Vicarious Trauma" cohort also engages in monthly check-in calls and frequent peer support calls to provide a safe space for participants to share ideas, struggles, and strategies with each other, and get validation about what is going well with their staff and what challenges remain. A session with consultant Kelly Wilt (Integrative Counseling and Consulting, LLC), offered programs the opportunity to choose focus areas, including trauma-informed recruitment practices that are transparent about vicarious trauma in this work, trauma-informed supervision, building critical thinking skills for new staff, ensuring access to self-care and organizational care within the workplace, and improving workers' access to therapeutic counseling and support.

In 2022, we look forward to collaborating with current and future cohort participants to create and implement strategies to transform and grow as survivor-supporting organizations.

PUBLIC POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

NYSCASA educates legislators and other policy- and decision-makers about the impact, including unintended effects, of existing and proposed policies that affect sexual violence survivors and victims. NYSCASA also responds to requests for feedback about policies and also recommends policies that would improve sexual violence intervention and prevention services.

In May 2021, NYSCASA's policy team partnered with PowHer™ New York, the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and the New York State Office of the Attorney General to host a virtual panel exploring how the criminal legal system does not meet the needs of some survivors, particularly Black survivors and other survivors of color, and highlight a few community-based approaches across the state that are survivor-centered and culturally-inclusive. Featured panelists included NYS Attorney General Letitia James, Luz Marquez Benbow (International Alianza de Mujeres Negrx), Hailey Nolasco (Rise Project, Center for Court Innovation), Anne Patterson (STEPS to End Family Violence, Rising Ground), and Stas Schmiedt (Spring Up).

Throughout 2021, NYSCASA provided survivor-centered and trauma-informed policy analysis and information on the impact of various policies and legislation:

- Survivors of Trafficking Attaining Relief Together (START) Act, signed into law in November 2021
- Safe Way Home Act, signed into law in December 2019
- Child Victims Act, signed into law in January 2019
- Adult Survivors Act
- Comprehensive sexuality and sexual health education in statewide K-12 curriculum
- Community-centered strategies to prevent and respond to sexual violence that do not rely on the criminal legal system.
- Parole reform, bail reform, and other criminal legal system reforms
- Recent and future changes to federal Title IX rules.



PREVENTION

In 2021, NYSCASA's prevention team focused our efforts on supporting SADI cohort participants working to strengthen their prevention efforts ([page 4](#)).

In January 2021, NYSCASA's prevention team offered our organizational members opportunities to be trained in facilitating the Stop It Now! Circles of Safety prevention curriculum. Based on violence prevention and bystander engagement research, public health and adult education models, Circles of Safety provides professional caregivers and youth-serving organizations with the tools, support and training to create safer environments for both the children and families they serve, and for their staff and programs. Adaptable to any youth-serving environment, Circles of Safety brings education and information together with confidence and skill building activities to prepare adults to speak up and prevent sexual abuse.

In December 2021, NYSCASA's prevention team collaborated with the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) to host NYSCADV's 7th Annual Prevention Summit. Sarah Podber, NYSCASA's Prevention Director, joined Lorien Castelle (NYSCADV) to co-facilitate a virtual peer learning exchange for primary prevention educators and advocates. Participants learned about how victim assistance programs have created innovative approaches to adapt to their communities' prevention needs during the ongoing COVID pandemic, as well as how they are grappling with ongoing issues of burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and staff turnover that impact staff wellbeing and programs' ability to sustain prevention work.

NYSCASA and NYSCADV also co-hosted a virtual film screening of *You Throw Like a Girl* and discussion with Don McPherson, author of *You Throw Like a Girl: The Blind Spot of Masculinity*. Participants engaged in dialogue about how narrow definitions of masculinity adversely affect women and hinder the healthy development of men, and how we can move beyond the "blind spots" of traditional masculinity and toward solutions that engage men in dialogue and violence prevention.



ADDRESSING CAMPUS SEXUAL VIOLENCE

NYSCASA continues to provide technical assistance and training to rape crisis programs and college campuses to implement New York State's "Enough Is Enough" legislation through the New York State Training and Technical Assistance Center, a joint partnership between NYSCASA and the New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault. The Center aims to create equitable and accessible training opportunities and provide multiple levels of support to rape crisis programs and colleges across New York State.

The initiative supports the work of rape crisis and sexual violence programs who work with victims and survivors of sexual violence in New York State, with a focus on assistance and services provided to college campuses through the "Enough Is Enough" program. The initiative was funded by the New York State Department of Health and subsequently the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence through the Federal Preventative Health and Health Service Block Grant.

In 2021, training topics included onboarding new Enough Is Enough advocates and using media literacy education to promote sexual and relationship health and prevent sexual violence on campus.



Student Activist Network Against Sexual Assault

A project of the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault

In 2021, NYSCASA also launched the Student Activist Network Against Sexual Assault (SANASA), a statewide network of strong student activists leading efforts to increase campus engagement in genuinely and meaningfully preventing sexual violence and meeting student survivors' needs. Selected student activist groups across New York State have an opportunity to receive training, peer support, and customized assistance during a two-year period.

Together, we've already begun assessing the unique needs and resources on each campus. Students will also find commonalities and overarching issues amongst their peers across the state. The SANASA will address these issues as they emerge, ensuring that student voices are centered.

Student-led activist groups participating in the first cohort of the SANASA include:

- New Paltz Accountability
- University of Buffalo Sexual Violence Prevention
- The Peer Support Team at St. John Fisher College

ADDRESSING PRISON/JAIL SEXUAL VIOLENCE

NYSCASA continues to collaborate with rape crisis programs, criminal justice professionals, and allied organizations to support survivors who are incarcerated in New York's prisons, jails, and detention centers through the New York State PREA Partnership.

Rape crisis centers that participate in the NYS PREA Partnership are designated as PREA Centers. Each PREA Center has entered into a written agreement with multiple state prisons from which they take calls and for which they provide a variety of counseling and advocacy services for survivors who are imprisoned.

PREA Centers

- Center for Victim Safety and Support at Family Services, Inc.
- Crisis Services, Inc.
- Crime Victims Treatment Center
- RESTORE Sexual Assault Services of Planned Parenthood
- Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes
- St. Peter's Crime Victim Services
- Vera House, Inc.
- Victim Advocacy Services of Planned Parenthood of Greater New York
- Victims Assistance Center of Jefferson County
- Victims Assistance Services at Westchester Community Opportunity Program

In 2021, NYSCASA's PREA team hosted a webinar in partnership with Just Detention International about providing rape crisis services to survivors imprisoned in county jails. In the coming years, we look forward to expanding our work to include county jails, juvenile detention facilities, and immigrant detention facilities.

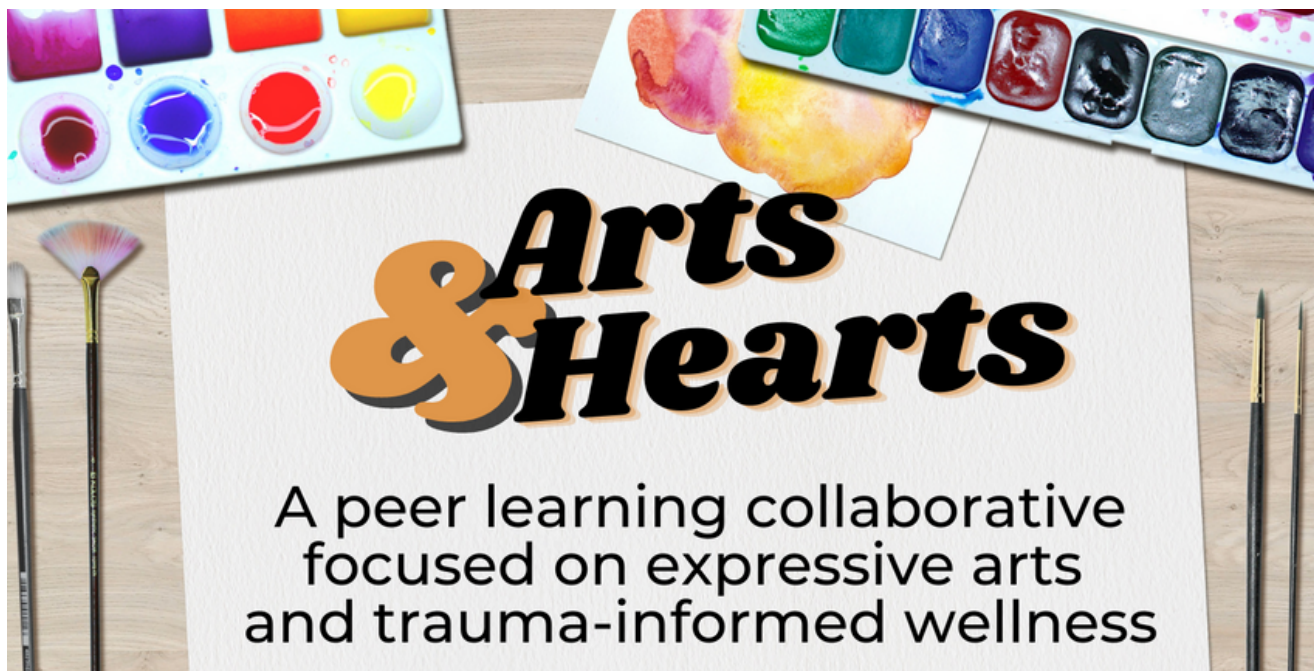


TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

NYSCASA strives to conduct all of our work through a trauma-informed lens. We continue to increase accessibility for our webinars and trainings and to seek partnerships to center the voices of unserved, underserved, and mis-served survivors. We continue to support trauma-informed training opportunities and resources, including books and films available to our membership and their partners.

In 2021, NYSCASA's Building Connections: Sexual Assault and Mental Health Project focused efforts on supporting the expansion of the New York State Trauma Informed Network as they continued their role as Advisory Members and Network Ambassadors. Project directors also participated with the leadership and advisory group for the NYS Trauma Informed Coalition. We supported and promoted a virtual rally on trauma, and other virtual presentations led by that coalition offered at various conferences and statewide events. We also promoted the National Committee of Trauma Informed Policy and Practice by sharing their educational information with policy directors and other decision-makers in NYS.

The Building Connections team also collaborated with the Mental Health Association in New York State and regional trauma-informed care experts to host quarterly "Arts & Hearts" virtual meetings for survivors and survivor-supporting professionals in New York State. Arts & Hearts is a peer sharing and learning space focused on expressive arts for trauma-informed wellness, preventing and addressing vicarious trauma, and sharing vital practices. We look forward to continuing to host Arts & Hearts in 2022.



ENDING VIOLENCE WITHOUT VIOLENCE

"Ending Violence Without Violence" was originally conceived by NYSCASA and our community partners, Seven Dancers Coalition, and Interrupting Criminalization: Research in Action Project, to be a statewide conference focusing on sexual violence prevention, intervention, and response.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the in-person conference was cancelled. Instead, NYSCASA and partners developed a virtual training series of the same name, from September 2020 to September 2021. Through this series, we provided participants with information and tools that they can use to help build communities that can prevent sexual violence, respond to harm, and heal trauma.

Training topics included:

- Introduction to "community-based" approaches to sexual violence and response, including peace-making, restorative justice, and community accountability
- Restorative justice principles and practices
- Transformative justice principles and practices
- Centering the experiences of Black Latinx survivors of sexual abuse
- Centering the experiences of Indigenous survivors of state violence and sexual violence
- Intersections of criminalization, incarceration, and sexual violence victimization
- Ongoing legacies of historical trauma and intergenerational trauma
- Efforts to support criminalized and incarcerated survivors and end the criminalization of survival
- Creating healing opportunities for survivors through storytelling, ritual, and retreat spaces
- Supporting advocates who are also survivors of trauma and violence

To access recordings and resources from Ending Violence Without Violence, visit bit.ly/EndingViolenceWithoutViolence (note: this URL is case-sensitive).



WELCOMING NEW STAFF IN 2022

Please join NYSCASA in welcoming three new staff members to our team!

Marketa Edwards (she/her/hers)

Enough Is Enough Campus Projects Director

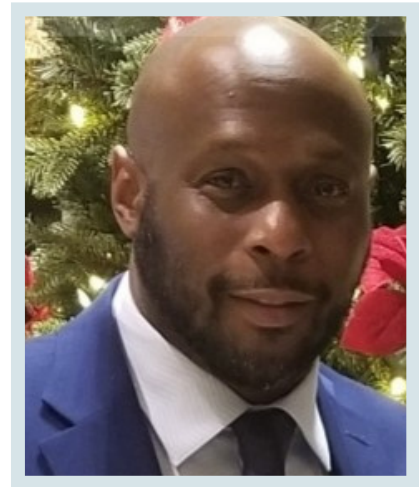
Marketa Edwards is a mother of five children living in South Troy, where she has made a home with her fiancé, children, and two grandchildren. Marketa previously worked as an organizer at the Katal Center for Health, Equity, and Justice. Marketa also co-founded and serves as the Executive Director of the Community Rising Project, an organization dedicated to supporting families who are directly impacted by state-sanctioned violence and by involvement in the criminal legal system.



Thomas Kearney (he/him/his)

Prison Rape Elimination Act Outreach Director

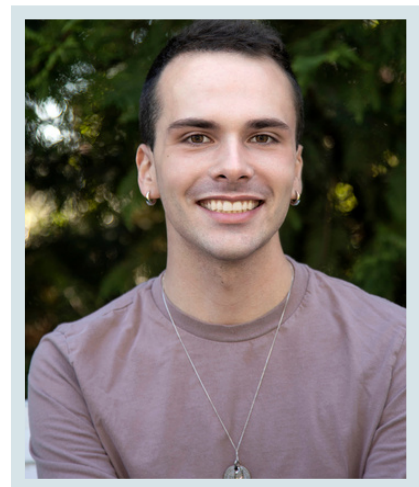
Thomas Kearney is an activist, advocate, abolitionist, and community organizer from Catskill, NY. He's a formerly incarcerated individual who has since become a trauma-informed Substance Abuse Recovery Coach, co-founded an organization addressing food insecurity and mass incarceration in the Capital Region, and helped create a program that promises to get individuals into the workforce after they are released from custody.



Max Micallef (they/she/he)

Public Policy Director

Max Micallef previously served as the Public Policy Coordinator with GLSEN Lower Hudson Valley before transitioning into a role as their Political Advisor, and as the Youth Outreach & Project Coordinator with Frameline, a national LGBTQ+ media nonprofit. Through their work on the Advisory Council of EqualityNY, Max continues to advocate for the intersectional needs of queer people, including dismantling sexual violence and intertwining oppressions.



GRATITUDE AND THANKS

Our work would not be possible without a powerful network of supporters, survivors, advocates, organizers, and allied professionals. Your support helps NYSCASA advocate for survivors, improve responses to sexual violence, and strengthen prevention efforts across New York State.

2021 Staff

- Joanne Zannoni • Executive Director
- Chrys Ballerano • Sr. Director of Collaboration and Training
- Josie McPherson • Sr. Director of Systems Advocacy
- Sandra Siciliano • Sr. Director of Finance and Human Resources
- Selena Bennett-Chambers • Director of Public Policy
- E Bjorkman • PREA Outreach Director/SANASA Campus Projects Director
- Sarah Podber • Prevention Director
- Sana Abdelkarim • University Fellow, Consultant
- Sujathi ("Sam") Mitchell • Human Resources Director
- Chelsea ("Chel") Miller • Communications Director
- Articia Hill • Grants Compliance Director
- Angelina ("Angie") Ritorto • Technical Assistance Director
- Alissa Abbott • Campus Projects Director

2021 Board of Directors

Tamika Payne, President • Nick Beard, Vice President • Reina Schiffrin, Treasurer • Janice Brown, Secretary • Sarita Green • Elaine Theodore • Lexa (Noris) DeJesus-Petrone • Elisha Wolfer • JoLynn Backes • Rachel Barranca Powell • Saswati Sarkar

2021 Donors

NYSCASA wishes to express deep gratitude to the following donors:

Riders4Rights • Scarsdale Edgemont Family Counseling Service and the Safe Coalition: Children, Families and Community • Tides Foundation • JoLynn Backes • Nick Beard • Janice Brown • Karol Dean • Lexa (Noris) DeJesus-Petrone • Sarah FitzSimmons • Emily Gordon • Cynthia Hall • Dee Levy • Rosie Mattio • Kathleen Hanlon O'Connell • Ellen Mindel • Tamika Payne • Saswati Sarkar • Maya Shaw-Faber • Douglas Vaca • Elisha Wolfer • James Wood

2021 Members

In addition to our 80+ member rape crisis programs throughout New York State, as well as the NYSCASA Board of Directors, the following individuals and organizations became NYSCASA members in 2021:

Chances and Changes, Inc. • Erie County Medical Center • Hands of Hope Outreach Ministries, Inc. • Middle Way House, Inc. • Seven Dancers Coalition • Soaring Pathways • STOP Domestic Violence • The Retreat, Inc. • Unity House • Violence Intervention Program/VIP Mujeres, Inc. • Marie Bell • Rachel Bell • Leigh Clayton • Nichole Descalso • Lisa Feldman • Alison Fimognari • Bonnie Freirich • Oni Galloway • Nirvannie Goberdan • Ilyssa Guerra • Anna Jantz • Erica Nedd • Olivia Pascal • Jessica Rodgers • Barbara Rome • Diana Rose • Joses (Fantasma) Solomon • Vicki Stafford • Molly Wolosky • Tamika Youmans

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