



Prosecuting Sexual Assault Course

April 8 – 10, 2024

Speaker Biographies



Travis Bird

*Assistant Director, Education
& Engagement
National District Attorneys
Association
1400 Crystal Drive, Suite 330
Arlington, VA 22202
703-519-1691 (Office)
tbird@ndaajustice.org*

Travis Bird is an Assistant Director of Education & Engagement with NDAA. Before joining NDAA, Travis had an almost twenty-year prosecution career in Virginia. In his career, he handled everything from traffic offenses to Capital Murder. After spending his first twelve years as an Assistant and then Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney in Fredericksburg, he was elected as the Commonwealth's Attorney for neighboring Spotsylvania County. During his two terms, he continually lowered the crime rate through aggressive prosecution but also created a Regional Veteran's Treatment Docket, a Behavioral Health Docket, and a Misdemeanor First-Time Offender Program called SLATE allowing offenders to wipe their "slate clean" by participating in litter pickup and good behavior. SLATE stood for Spotsylvania Litter and Trash Elimination. Thus practicing what he called Tough but Fair Prosecution.

Aside from his courtroom duties, he has presented for the Department of Homeland Security, ATF, Virginia State Police, Virginia Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council, local law enforcement agencies, and the Rappahannock Regional Criminal Justice Academy. He was a fifteen-year member of the faculty for Virginia's Trial Advocacy Program that trains new prosecutors yearly, presenting on Investigating and Cross-Examination of Experts, Meeting and Making Objections, and even Closing Arguments on occasion. Additionally, he regularly assisted the FBI with Moot Court Trainings for their CART Teams and the Virginia State Police with their DRE trainings.

Travis sits on the Board of Directors for the Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center, the Board of Trustees for the Spotsylvania Regional Hospital, and the Board of Directors for the local Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program. He is a past Board Member of the Rappahannock Regional Jail Board, Rappahannock Area Community Criminal Justice Board, Virginia Association of Commonwealth Attorneys, and Council Member for the Virginia Commonwealth's Attorney's Services Council.

Before becoming a prosecutor, Travis was an assistant public defender in Virginia and prior to that he was a probation officer.

Travis received his law degree from the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida and his B.S. in Criminology from Florida State University.



Prosecuting Sexual Assault Course

April 8 – 10, 2024

Speaker Biographies



Christy Bertera

Criminal Justice Specialist
NWF Health Network
cbertera@aol.com

Christina Bertera has more than 19 years of experience within the Florida criminal justice, child welfare, and social service systems. Ms. Bertera earned both her Bachelor's degree and Master's degree in Social Work from Florida State University.

Ms. Bertera began her career in social work as a Victim Advocate for the Second Judicial Circuit's Office of the State Attorney where she provided direct and referral services to victims of violent crimes throughout Wakulla and Franklin Counties for more than 8 years. She went on to become the Second Circuit's Supervisor of the Juvenile Diversion Alternative Program under DISC Village and then served for over 5 years as a Child Protection Team Forensic Interviewer gathering critical information for children that have been severely abused or maltreated in order to convict the offenders. Ms. Bertera has also served as a Clemency Victim Advocate under the Florida Commission on Offender Review, and now works as a Criminal Justice Specialist with NWF Health Network where she works with law enforcement agencies across 18 counties to address the intersection of behavioral health and the criminal justice system.

Ms. Bertera has served on the Board of Directors for the Big Bend Victim Assistance Coalition for the past 9 years. She has received local and national recognition for her dedication to victims of crime and her work towards making positive changes in the criminal justice system.



Prosecuting Sexual Assault Course

April 8 – 10, 2024

Speaker Biographies



Elliott Casey

Staff Attorney
Commonwealth's Attorney
Services Council
757-253-4153
ejcasey@wm.edu

Elliott Casey is a Staff Attorney for the Virginia Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council. Elliott has 15 years' experience as a prosecutor, having served as an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney for the County of Albemarle, the City of Alexandria, and the County of Arlington in Virginia, and several more years of experience in law enforcement and as an attorney. A graduate of the University of Virginia School of Law, Elliott also served as a Special Assistant United States Attorney for the Western District of Virginia. Elliott specializes in digital evidence, Fourth Amendment issues, and complex financial crime. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia School of Law, is proficient in Spanish, German, and Japanese, and has experience speaking Chinese, French, and Korean. Elliott also instructs law enforcement agencies throughout the Virginia and D.C. area and investigators around the United States. Elliott instructs for the National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, the Association of Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists, and many other groups. Elliott was honored with the Virginia IASIU Outstanding Public Service Award in 2022 as well as Virginia Lawyer's Weekly 2022 "Leaders in the Law" award.



Prosecuting Sexual Assault Course

April 8 – 10, 2024

Speaker Biographies



Kelly Cotting

Contract Attorney

kelly.cotting@gmail.com

Kelly Cotting is an innovative and experienced litigator who has dedicated her career to helping people navigate the legal system. After graduating from UVA Law in 2010, she joined a small practice engaged in general litigation, including contracts, insurance defense, employment, and family law. Later, she transitioned to prosecution. Over her twelve years as a prosecutor, Kelly handled thousands of cases including more than thirty jury trials and several murder cases. She specialized in domestic violence and crimes against children, developing specific expertise in financial crimes, computer crimes, and sexual abuse. She has handled, and won, a number of high publicity sexual abuse trials. Several of her cases have been upheld by the Virginia Court of Appeals and Virginia Supreme Court and created binding legal precedent. She has extensive experience working with expert witnesses including training them to testify in Court. Over the years she has provided trial consulting services to other prosecutors on issues including expert witnesses and voir dire. Prior to leaving Virginia, she regularly taught continuing legal education to attorneys, child welfare workers and law enforcement.

Kelly relocated to Seattle in 2022 where she resumed general litigation work. She is licensed in Washington and has an inactive license in Virginia.



Prosecuting Sexual Assault Course

April 8 – 10, 2024

Speaker Biographies



Courtney Curtis

Assistant Executive Director
Indiana Prosecuting
Attorneys Council
317-232-1836 (Office)
ccurtis@ipac.in.gov

As Assistant Executive Director of the Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council, Courtney Curtis leads the Council's training curriculum for all of Indiana's prosecutors statewide, oversees creation and updating of trial manuals, and provides trial assistance to each of the State's 92 counties in addition to legislative initiatives. Previously, Courtney has lead domestic violence prosecutions in Johnson County, Indiana, and was the Division Chief of the Special Victims Team for the Marion County Prosecutor's Office, located in Indianapolis, Indiana. As Division Chief, Courtney lead Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Child Molest, and Human Trafficking prosecutions for a division of 27 attorneys and 4 assistant supervisors. She was responsible for community outreach, screening guidelines, and multi-disciplinary trainings as well. Courtney served as Chair for the Marion County Child Fatality Review and was a co-leader of the Child Fatality Trial Team. She has extensive experience in major felony crimes such as Burglary and Robbery and was a member of the Homicide unit. Courtney has trained for the states of Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, and Indiana in addition to training for NDAA for years in the areas of Trial Advocacy, Homicide, Sexual Assault, Child Molestation, and Domestic Violence. In 2013, Courtney traveled to Mexico City on behalf of the Conference of Western Attorneys General to train Mexican prosecutors as they enacted the right to trial by jury for the first time. Courtney is a recipient of NDAA's 2020 Distinguished Faculty Award.



Prosecuting Sexual Assault Course

April 8 – 10, 2024

Speaker Biographies



Fara Gold

Attorney Advisor
Office on Violence Against
Women
United States Department of
Justice
Fara.Gold@usdoj.gov

Fara Gold is a former federal and state prosecutor, who currently serves as an attorney advisor for the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) with the United States Department of Justice (DOJ), working to strengthen the federal response to gender-based violence. Prior to joining OVW, Fara served as Special Litigation Counsel and Senior Sex Crimes Counsel for DOJ's Civil Rights Division for nearly 14 years, where she traveled throughout the country, prosecuting bias-motivated crimes and law enforcement misconduct cases. Fara has national expertise in prosecuting sexual misconduct by law enforcement and other government actors, and she has published several articles and conducts nationwide trainings in that regard. Fara was awarded the Attorney General's Award for Exceptional Service in 2014 (DOJ's highest honor) and the Attorney General's Award for Outstanding Contributions by a New Employee in 2012. She also received the DOJ OIG Collaboration Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Inspector General in 2023, the FBI Director's Award for Excellence in 2021, and the Assistant Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service in 2020. Before joining DOJ, Fara served as an Assistant State Attorney for the Broward County State Attorney's Office in Fort Lauderdale, Florida where she specialized in prosecuting sex crimes and child abuse. Fara also serves as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University Law Center where she teaches, "Prosecuting Sex Crimes & Vindicating Constitutional Rights."



Prosecuting Sexual Assault Course

April 8 – 10, 2024

Speaker Biographies



Paul Greenwood

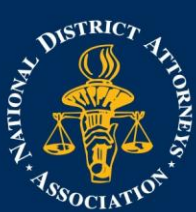
Deputy District Attorney
(Retired)
Head of Elder Abuse
Prosecution Unit
San Diego District Attorney's
Office
pgreendda@gmail.com

Retired Deputy District Attorney Paul Greenwood was a solicitor in England for 13 years. After relocating to San Diego in 1991 he passed the California Bar and joined the DA's office in 1993. For twenty-two years Paul headed up the Elder Abuse Prosecution Unit at the San Diego DA's Office. In 1999 California Lawyer magazine named Paul as one of their top 20 lawyers of the year in recognition of his pioneering efforts to pursue justice on behalf of senior citizens.

He has prosecuted over 750 felony cases of both physical, sexual, emotional and financial elder abuse. He has also prosecuted ten murder cases, including one death penalty case.

In March 2018 Paul retired from the San Diego DA's office to concentrate on sharing lessons learned from his elder abuse prosecutions with a wider audience. In October 2018 he was given a lifetime achievement award by his former office.

Paul now spends much of his post-retirement time speaking on behalf of AARP nationally, consulting on elder abuse cases, testifying as an expert witness and providing trainings to law enforcement and Adult Protective Services agencies across the country and internationally. He is also involved as the criminal justice board member of National Adult Protective Services Association.



Prosecuting Sexual Assault Course

April 8 – 10, 2024

Speaker Biographies



Retired Grays Harbor Sheriff's Detective Ed McGowan was employed by the Grays Harbor County Sheriff's Office from April 1978 until February 2014. Det. McGowan worked corrections and patrol until he became a detective in 1988 and worked in several capacities to include General Crimes and Narcotics, but spent the majority of his twenty-six years investigating sexual assault cases and crimes against children. Aside from those duties, Ed was the Search and Rescue Coordinator, a Department Diver, and the Emergency Operations Center Manager at times in his career. He retired in 2014 to become Deputy Director of Court Security for the county in 2014.

Det. Ed McGowan

Sexual Assault & Crimes
Against Children Detective
(Retired)
Grays Harbor Sheriff's Office
edmcgowan@graysharbor.us
