

# Domestic Violence in Our Community: Impact and Intervention

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## Speaker Biographies

### ***Judge Pamela J. Baker***

Judge Pamela Baker received her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Louisiana State University in 1981, and her Juris Doctor degree from LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center in 1984. Prior to her election to the bench, Judge Baker was in private practice for 21 years with the firm of Saltamachia & Baker, where her practice consisted primarily of family law cases.

Currently, she is the reporter for the Family Law Committee of the Louisiana State Law Institute and also serves as a member of the surrogacy committee. Judge Baker also serves on the Judicial Budgetary Control Board. She is a member of the Advisory Committee of the Judicial Education Curriculum Project, a project of the Louisiana Supreme Court's Protective Order Registry. She serves on the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' Family Violence and Domestic Relations Advisory Committee. She is a past chair of the Family Law Section of the Baton Rouge Bar Association and the immediate past president of the Louisiana Chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. She is a member of the Louisiana Bar Foundation Capital Area Community Partnership Panel and a member of the pro se litigants committee of the Louisiana District Judges Association. Judge Baker is also the Louisiana Council of Juvenile and Family Courts Association's designee to the Child Support Guideline review committee. She also serves on the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement Victim Services Advisory Board.

### ***Judge John Michael Guidry***

Judge John Michael Guidry received his B.A. in Political Science from LSU in 1983 and is a 1987 Cum Laude graduate of the Southern University Law Center. In April 2010, Judge Guidry was inducted into the Southern University Law Center Hall of Fame.

Judge Guidry formerly served as a legislative assistant. He also served as the Assistant Clerk of the Louisiana House of Representatives and as an assistant parish attorney.

Judge Guidry is a former commissioner of the Greater Baton Rouge Port Commission and the Greater Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport Commission. Judge Guidry, since 1988, has served as an adjunct professor at Southern University Law Center and since 1993, has served as an adjunct professor in the Nelson Mandela School of Public Policy at Southern University. In 1991, Judge Guidry was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives and to the State Senate in 1993. He was elected to his current position as a Judge of the First Circuit Court of Appeal in October 1997. He has been re-elected twice to that position.

He is a member of the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, the Baton Rouge, Louisiana, National, and American Bar Associations as well as the American Judges Association, the Louisiana Conference Court of Appeal Judges, and the Louisiana Judicial Council of the National Bar Association. In 2009 and 2012 Judge Guidry was elected as the Louisiana Conference of Court of Appeal Judges representative to the Louisiana Judicial Council for three-year terms and has been appointed twice by the Louisiana Supreme Court on the recommendation of its Chief Justice to serve on the governing body of the Louisiana Judicial College. Judge Guidry is president of the Board of Governors of the Louisiana Judicial College. He is a member of the Domestic Violence Curriculum Development Committee. Judge Guidry also serves on the Pro Bono Committee of the Baton Rouge Bar Association.

### ***Judge Laura Prosser***

Judge Laura Prosser was born and raised in Baton Rouge. She received a BS in Psychology and Educational Research from the University of Virginia and a M.Ed. in Counseling from the University of Virginia. She spent ten years teaching and counseling on the high school level before entering LSU Law School. After working as a law clerk in the 19th Judicial District Court, she opened a private practice as a mediator and arbitrator of civil and family disputes in 1993. She was elected Baton Rouge City Court Judge in 2000. She has been an adjunct professor of Civil and Family Law Mediation at LSU Law Center since 1995. She is a member of the following organizations and community groups: Baton Rouge and Louisiana Bar Associations, Baton Rouge Association of Women Attorneys, Sunrise Rotary Club, Adjunct Professor of Civil and Family Mediation at LSU Law School, Family Mediation Council of Louisiana - Former State President, Charter board member of Capital Area Community Mediation Center, Former President of Louisiana City Judges Association.

### ***Melanie Fields***

Melanie S. Fields is an Assistant District Attorney with the 19th Judicial District in East Baton Rouge Parish. She graduated magna cum laude from the University of St. Thomas Aquinas and received a master's degree and juris doctorate from Louisiana State University. Ms. Fields serves on various committees of the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation and serves on the board of the Iris Domestic Violence Center. She has been an adjunct professor of Legal Writing at Southern University's Law Center for 8 years, and as an ADA she has over 12 years trial experience. She currently serves as the Special Prosecutor of Domestic Violence.

### ***Hillar Moore III***

Hillar C. Moore III was born in New Orleans, Louisiana. He attended St. Aloysius High School and Brother Martin High School. He received his B.S. in Criminal Justice from LSU and completed course work for a Masters in Criminal Justice. He received his J.D. from Southern University Law Center in 1989.

He serves on the following boards: Louisiana Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice Commission; Crimestoppers; Louisiana State Senate Witness Protection Services Board; Louisiana District Attorneys Association Board Member; and the 2 Seam Dream Foundation.

He has been awarded with the following honors: 2010 Hall of Distinction, LSU; 2010 Alumni Hall of Fame, Southern University; 2010 Cenikor's Elected Official of the Year; 2012 Sunshine Foundation Honoree; 2013 Esprit de Femme/Men Who Champion Women Honoree; 2014 Children's Coalition For the Love of Children Lifetime Achievement Award; and the 2014 LSU College of Human Sciences & Education Community Partner Award.

He is a member of the following: St. Aloysius and the Chapel at OLOL; President, LSU Baseball Coaches' Committee; Catholic High Men's Club; St. Aloysius Men's Club; YMCA/Baton Rouge Kid's Clinic; Louis Martinet Legal Society; National Organization of Black Enforcement Executives; Louisiana District Attorney; National District Attorney Association; Louisiana State Bar Association; Baton Rouge Bar Association; Rotary Club; Louisiana Witness Protection Board; Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement; Drug Control and Violent Crimes Policy Board.

His past memberships include: Board of Directors of Baton Rouge Bar Association; Baton Rouge Bar Association; LA State Bar Association; Martindale Hubbell (Rated AV); District Attorney Investigator (1977-1988); Past President of Baton Rouge Bar of Criminal Justice; Bishop Sullivan High School Board of Directors (Bishop's Representative); Board Member YMCA Paul G. Manship Branch; Coach Baton Rouge Tigers Baseball; YMCA Coach in Basketball, Soccer, and Baseball (Coach of the Year); National District Attorney's Association Investigators' Section; and the Louisiana District Attorney's Association Investigator's Section.

### ***Sheriff Sid Gautreaux***

Sheriff Sid J. Gautreaux III was sworn into office on December 4, 2007 after being elected to fill the unexpired term of Sheriff Elmer Litchfield. Gautreaux, who began his law enforcement career as a uniform patrol deputy in the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office, served as Police Chief of the City of Baker for 27 years before resigning to run for Sheriff. As Baker Police Chief, Gautreaux was elected to

office seven times, and was unopposed for the last four terms. Sheriff Gautreaux was elected Sheriff on a platform of focusing priorities on uniform patrol and developing greater communication among local, regional and state law enforcement agencies to help make East Baton Rouge Parish safer. In 2012, Sheriff Sid Gautreaux was elected as Sergeant-At-Arms and Secretary Treasurer for the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association. Sheriff Gautreaux is married to Suzi Eckert Gautreaux. They have four children - Will, Chantel, Ben and Ginny - and ten grandchildren.

His experience is as follows: Sheriff of East Baton Rouge Parish, 2007-Present; Chief of the Baker Police Department, 1980-2007 (Ran unopposed for the last four terms); East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, 1976-1980 (Sergeant in Uniform Patrol); FBI National Academy, Graduate; FBI National Executive Institute, Graduate; LSU Law Enforcement Institute, Graduate; LSU Law Enforcement Basic Training Academy, Graduate; Elected Class President for both (one of only three); Louisiana Sheriff's Association, Secretary Treasurer; Louisiana Sheriff's Association, Emergency Task Force; Delta Drug Task Force, Chairman; National Sheriff's Association, Member; Louisiana Association of Chiefs of Police, Past President and Member; Southeast Louisiana Chiefs of Police Association, Past President; International Association of Chiefs of Police, Member; Capitol Area Regional Training Academy, Board of Directors; Baton Rouge Area Foundation; Baton Rouge Children's Advocacy Center, Board of Directors; Boy Scouts of America, Board of Directors; Louisiana Supplemental Pay Board for Municipal Officers, Chairman, 1982-2007; FBI National Academy Associates, Member; Graduate of Baker High School and attended Northwestern University and University of Virginia.

### ***Chief Carl Dabadie Jr.***

Chief Carl Dabadie was born March 7, 1965 in Baton Rouge, LA. He grew up and graduated from Baker High School in 1983 and then attended Arkansas State University and LSU. He joined the Baton Rouge Police Department in 1985 as a second generation police officer; his father, Lt. Carl Dabadie Sr., was killed in the line of duty in 1984. He has served in command positions as Director of Training, Assistant Uniform Patrol Commander, Chief of Staff and currently is Chief of Police. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, 224th session. He is married to Carla Settoon Dabadie and is the proud father of two boys. His hobbies include fishing, wood working and motorcycling.

### ***Sergeant Brenda Gann***

Sgt. Brenda Gann has been with the Baton Rouge City Police Department for the past 22 years. She is currently the Domestic Violence Coordinator for the police department. She has a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from LSU. She has worked in several Violent Crimes Divisions over the years and won Detective of the year in 2003 and the BRAWA Award in 2009.

### ***Lisa Freeman***

Lisa Freeman is a native of Plaquemine, Louisiana. She attended LSU where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree and then a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice, while working with "lifers" at Angola Penitentiary. She later graduated from the Columbus School of Law at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. where she received her Juris Doctorate degree. While in law school, she was a member of the Journal of Contemporary Health Law and Policy Law Review, and she also worked for minorities and indigents in D.C. Superior Court as a clinical law student. Since 1990, she has been employed by the Baton Rouge City Prosecutor's Office, where she has served as Chief of the Domestic Violence Section and of the DWI Section. In 2005, she became First Assistant City Prosecutor and was appointed as City Prosecutor in March, 2011. In 2012, Ms. Freeman was named "Prosecutor of the Year" by the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission. Ms. Freeman sits on various boards and commissions, most of which have as their mission the reduction of impaired driving, underage drinking and domestic abuse. She is also active in organizations that take proactive measures in schools in the areas of substance abuse and conflict resolution.

### ***Brandon Romano, Psy.D.***

Brandon P. Romano, Psy.D., M.S.C.P., a Clinical and Forensic Psychologist, has worked in the field of behavioral health since 1989 in numerous public and private settings serving in roles ranging from direct care to clinician to administrator. He founded his own private practice, Brandon P. Romano, Psy.D. &

Associates, LLC, in 2005. Dr. Romano also co-owns other behavioral health entities and is the CEO/President of a non-profit organization providing behavioral healthcare to the underserved in East Baton Rouge and surrounding parishes. He obtained his Bachelors in Social Counseling, his Masters in Pre-Clinical Psychology / Psychometrics, and his Doctorate in Clinical Psychology. He completed his doctoral internship at the Mississippi State Hospital and his postdoctoral residency with the LSUHSC Juvenile Corrections Program. In addition, Dr. Romano completed his Postdoctoral Master of Science in Clinical Psychopharmacology through Alliant International University in 2010 and plans to sit for his national licensing examination to prescribe psychotropic medication. Dr. Romano's practices range from the evaluation and treatment of forensic (legal) matters to emotional, behavioral, educational, mental health and substance abuse problems. His extremely expansive career has also included serving on mental health, addiction, and forensic committees, steering committees, workgroups, and management teams on the state level as well as being appointed to State Governmental and Legislative Committees and Subcommittees. He has provided supervision and training on behavioral health evaluation and treatment to numerous well-known clinicians practicing in the State of Louisiana.

Dr. Romano is an approved provider for countless local, state, and federal agencies and works closely with numerous physicians, psychiatric hospitals, addiction facilities, schools, attorneys, courts, law enforcement, worker's compensation companies, and other entities. His services have also been requested by agencies from several other states over the years. Dr. Romano has been tendered as an expert witness in multiple jurisdictions countless times, including being involved in highly publicized criminal and civil cases. He is frequently asked to provide lectures, presentations, seminars, keynote speeches, and discussion on various behavioral health matters. He previously served as the Secretary and Public Policy Officer for the Louisiana Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers and was the Chair of Membership for the Louisiana Psychological Association for many years. Dr. Romano is currently a member of several professional organizations including the Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychologists. Dr. Romano was the sole recipient of the Louisiana Psychological Association's Early Career Award in 2008. He has been featured in local and national newspapers and magazines as well as on television and radio talk shows discussing topics such as sex offenders, parenting, child safety, holiday stress, and violent mental health.

### ***Amanda Chapoton, LPC***

Amanda H. Chapoton, LPC-S, LMFT, a Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor (LPC-S) and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), serves as our Director of Clinical Services. She joined Brandon P. Romano, Psy.D. & Associates in 2010. Ms. Chapoton earned her undergraduate degree in Psychology from Southeastern Louisiana University in 1997. She earned a Master of Education in Counseling from Southeastern Louisiana University in 2001. In addition to her LPC-S and LMFT, Ms. Chapoton earned her certification as a Registered Play Therapist in 2005. Her diverse career includes time as an adjunct professor at Southeastern Louisiana University teaching courses in career planning, child development and marriage and family studies. Her career also has been devoted to the treatment of children, youth and families affected by physical and sexual abuse. Her extensive experience in counseling includes treatment of high-risk youth and those with mental health disorders as part of the Louisiana Judicial System. In 2007, Ms. Chapoton began providing treatment to juveniles who were adjudicated for sexual offenses. In her work with Brandon P. Romano and Associates, her practice has focused on the treatment of both the victims and perpetrators of sexual offenses. She is a trained forensic interviewer who has assisted law enforcement and child protection services in over seven parishes with child sexual abuse investigations, including testifying in open court. She has been qualified to testify as an expert in the field of counseling in the courts of Louisiana. Ms. Chapoton currently provides services at our Main Clinic (Baton Rouge) and in the community.

### ***Alan Taylor, Ph.D.***

Dr. Alan Taylor earned his B.A., summa cum laude, from Louisiana Tech University in 1969 with a double major in Psychology and English, his M.S. in Psychology from Iowa State University in 1971 and his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from LSU in 1983. He is a member of the following professional societies: American Psychological Association (Division 42 – Independent Practice); Louisiana College of Forensic Examiners and the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. He has the following licenses and

certifications: Louisiana license #480 – Clinical Psychology; National Register of Health Service Providers #34669 and is a Diplomate, American Board of Psychological Specialties in Child Custody Evaluations. He serves on the following boards and committees: Board of Directors, Association of Family and Conciliation Courts, Louisiana Chapter, 2009 – Present; Chairman, Hospital Practice Committee of Louisiana Psychological Association Executive Committee, 1994-1995; Board of Directors, Baton Rouge Crisis Intervention Center, 1990 and Psychology Consulting Committee, Meadow Wood Hospital, 1990-1994. He has received the following research and training awards: NDEA Fellowship, Iowa State University, 1969-1971 and the Child Clinical Specialty Internship, Child Study Center, University of Arkansas Medical School (APA Approved).

### ***Judy Benitez***

Judy Benitez is the executive director at Baton Rouge's regional program for survivors of domestic violence. Iris Domestic Violence Center, formerly operating as Capital Area Family Violence Intervention Center and the Battered Women's Program, provides services to survivors of domestic violence and their children. This includes emergency shelter, a 24-hour crisis line, legal representation, court advocacy, counseling, support groups, children's services, safety planning, information and referrals, and community awareness programs. Iris Domestic Violence Center serves the parishes of East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, East and West Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, Iberville, and Ascension.

For the past 20 years, Judy served as executive director of Louisiana's federally recognized sexual assault coalition, Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault (LaFASA). Prior to working at the coalition, she had served as a victim advocate and program director at a prosecutor-based victim assistance and rape crisis program in Louisiana's 21st judicial district, comprising Livingston, Tangipahoa, and St. Helena parishes. Judy is a former news reporter with experience at newspapers in New York, Virginia, Massachusetts and Louisiana. She holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from Syracuse University and a master's degree in counseling from Southeastern Louisiana University. Judy has been qualified as an expert witness in state district court on both sexual assault and domestic violence. She has lectured at hundreds of state, regional, national and international trainings on crime victimization, sexual violence, and violence against women and children.

### ***Racheal Hebert***

Racheal Hebert is a community organizer and nonprofit manager with experience in a variety of programs, including initiatives involving the women's health, environmental and local arts communities.

She has worked at STAR since 2008, first as the volunteer coordinator and community educator, then as program director. As of November 2012, Racheal was promoted to executive director.

Racheal graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Sociology and Women's & Gender Studies from LSU in 2007 and a Masters in Social Work from LSU in 2013. Racheal is passionately dedicated to STAR's mission and vision of supporting survivors of sexual trauma and promoting healthy relationships and awareness in the community.

Racheal is an active member of several community groups, and serves on several Boards, including the Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault and the New Leaders Council - Louisiana Chapter.

### ***Toni Bankston***

Toni, a native of Baton Rouge, has been a child and family psychotherapist for 24 years in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Toni is a 25 year career professional with diverse skills and experience. She started out as a child and family psychotherapist with expertise in the areas of trauma and resiliency. She developed and executed several therapeutic curricula for children impacted by trauma and disaster. In the academic arena she served as Adjunct Faculty at L.S.U. and published several articles on her work with children in disaster situations. She has initiated and developed several programs including the mental health program for the Baton Rouge Children's Health Project, Neighbors Keepers and the Capital Area Alliance for the Homeless One-Stop Service Center. She also serves with the Center for Mind-Body Medicine, D.C. as a member of the U.S. Faculty and Global Trauma Relief Team in Haiti, Israel and the Gaza

territories. In this capacity she has developed programs and trained other healthcare professionals in trauma recovery, with an emphasis on programs for youth. Her local work in Louisiana includes bringing wellness programs to disadvantaged populations, including the homeless in Baton Rouge and children in school-based settings impacted by poverty and violence and working with Coastal residents in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Isaac and the Horizon BP Oil Spill. About seven months ago, she began working with the Children's Advocacy Center to help the agency enhance its offerings to children impacted by trauma and violence. She is also a wife, mother of four teenagers.

***Brent A. Villemarette, MSW, LCSW***

Brent A. Villemarette, MSW, LCSW is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who serves as the Deputy Secretary of Programs for DCFS. Villemarette is responsible for the oversight of programmatic initiatives and the development of policy related to child welfare, economic stability, crisis intervention and child development and child safety.

In his 30 years of child welfare experience, Villemarette has worked as a caseworker, supervisor, program specialist, district manager, regional administrator, Director of Field Services and Deputy Assistant Secretary in child welfare.

Prior to his appointment as Deputy Secretary of Programs, Villemarette served as the Regional Administrator for the Alexandria Region, where his responsibilities included the overall reorganization, supervision and management of all program areas in the region. Previously, Villemarette was the Director of the Division of Field Services in the former Office of Community Services with responsibility for administrative and program operations in all nine regions of the agency's statewide functions.

In addition, Villemarette has extensive experience in emergency preparedness including shelter management and EOC functions associated with DCFS' ESF-6 mission. Villemarette is a trained disaster mental health specialist and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Acadiana Area Chapter of the American Red Cross. Villemarette has provided disaster mental health services for several local and regional disasters, and he twice served at the site of the former World Trade Center in lower Manhattan providing disaster mental health services following the September 11th terrorist attacks. In addition, for almost two months, he served as Lead Shelter Manager for the Special Needs Shelter in Lafayette, Louisiana following hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Villemarette holds a bachelor's degree in Social Work Degree from Louisiana College and a master's degree in Social Work Degree from Louisiana State University. He maintains a private practice in medical social work focused primarily on elderly homebound patients. He has focused much of his career on treatment of trauma victims, volunteering as a mental health professional on Critical Incident Teams with the Southern Law Enforcement Foundation and the Acadiana Fire Critical Incident Stress Management team.

***Cordelia Heaney***

Cordelia Heaney serves as the Executive Director of the Office on Women's Policy, which is housed in the Department of Children & Family Services. The Office on Women's Policy focuses on public policy as it relates to the educational, health, social and economic well-being of women and girls in Louisiana. This office strives to serve as a connector between non-profits, state agencies, educational institutions, legislators, and concerned citizens, and to collaborate with these stakeholders on projects that address Louisiana women's needs. She serves on, and provides technical assistance to the Louisiana Women's Policy & Research Commission, the state's only commission focused specifically on the concerns and interests of Louisiana women and girls. Prior to beginning this role in September 2012, Cordelia was the Director of Student Leadership & Engagement at the Newcomb College Institute at Tulane University, where she worked with undergraduate women to develop their career preparedness and leadership skills. She holds an MBA from Tulane University, an MFA from New School University, and a BA from Barnard College, Columbia University. She has lived in New Orleans since 2004.