

**2021 Forensic Conference**

## **Current Issues Across the System**



**November 2021**

**Registration  
fee:  
\$20 per session  
or \$60 for all four  
sessions**

**Registration  
deadline:  
October 31**

**Four Online Sessions**

**November 2, 2021: Elizabeth Kelley, Attorney at Law**

“The Intersection of Mental Disabilities and the Criminal Justice System”

**November 4, 2021: Neil Gowensmith, Ph.D. and a Panel of Ohio’s Experts**

“National Issues related to Competency Restoration and Ohio’s Response: Implementation of SB2”

**November 5, 2021: John Tuell, M.A.**

“Dual Status Youth: Innovative Solutions & Positive Outcomes”

**November 12, 2021: Judge Jodi Thomas, Judge Cindi Morehart & Jill Hillman**

“The Role of the Mental Health Court in Ohio: Now and Moving Forward”

### **REGISTRATION**

**Online registration required**

**Registration and video conferencing will be provided by CONCEPT Continuing  
and Professional Studies**

**[Click to register.](#)**

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

OhioMHAS is pleased to announce that the 2021 Annual Forensic Conference will be held in November this year and we will again be presenting information through a virtual format. We have scheduled three two-hour sessions and one five-hour session that will be held live. The sessions will not be recorded.

Application has been made for applicable CEUs, CLEs, MCEs, and CMEs. You will have the opportunity to ask questions of the speakers during or at the end of each presentation.

All conference materials and presentations will be provided to registered participants via email, and links will be provided as well. Applicable continuing education certificates will be sent electronically after verification of attendance.

## REGISTRATION

Registration Deadline: Registration will end two days prior to each of the scheduled events (at 6:00 PM EST) and October 31, 2021 (at 4:00 PM EST) for registration for the complete package. Early registration is recommended because there is a limit to the audience size. Conference sessions may be filled before this deadline.

The Registration Fee for **each session** is \$20. If you register for all four sessions at once, one session is free. The package price for all four sessions is \$60. There is a student rate of \$10 per session (\$40 for all 4 sessions). Students who need a scholarship should contact Michelle Huegel, [MHuegel@FESC-OH.org](mailto:MHuegel@FESC-OH.org) for assistance.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

The conference sponsor will refund any registrations cancelled up to October 31 at 6:00 p.m. EST less \$5 to cover the costs of processing fees.

## QUESTIONS?

For questions about the conference programs please contact Robert Baker, PhD, [Robert.Baker@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:Robert.Baker@mha.ohio.gov) or Lisa Gordish, PsyD, [Lisa.Gordish@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:Lisa.Gordish@mha.ohio.gov). For questions about the registration process please contact Michelle Huegel, [MHuegel@FESC-OH.org](mailto:MHuegel@FESC-OH.org).

## **SESSION DETAILS**

### **Tuesday, November 2nd, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (EST)**

Elizabeth Kelley will speak about “The Intersection of Mental Disabilities and the Criminal Justice System.” She will describe her experience of representing individuals with disabilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorders, intellectual disabilities, and severe mental illness as well as her efforts to make the criminal justice system aware of the unique needs and situations for this population.

### **Thursday, November 4th, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (EST) and 12:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.**

Dr. Neil Gowensmith and a panel of Ohio experts will present National Issues related to Competency Restoration and Ohio’s Response: Implementation of SB2. Dr. Gowensmith will speak about the national trend towards increasing referrals for competency restoration which has placed heavy burdens on the state-operated psychiatric facilities resulting in waitlists for forensic services. He will also address the factors that may be driving this issue and how other states have responded. You will also learn about Ohio’s passage of Senate Bill 2 and the impact this will have on Ohio’s forensic mental health system. A Panel including Former Justice Evelyn Stratton, Christina Shaynak-Diaz, Dr. Robert Baker, Vicki Montesano, and Betsy Johnson will address the multi-system implications to SB 2 and how providers are responding.

### **Friday, November 5th, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (EST)**

John Tuell will present Dual Status Youth: Innovative Solutions & Positive Outcomes about juveniles who come into contact with both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and occupy various statuses in terms of their relationship to the two systems. A growing body of research has consistently confirmed that, in comparison to juveniles without such cross-system involvement, dual status youth present a range of important challenges. The challenges and costs associated with dual status youth strongly suggest the need to devise and implement innovative ways to manage these difficult cases. The RFK National Resource Center has provided guidance for state and local jurisdictions, including six currently in Ohio, in their endeavor to improve the outcomes for dual status youth (DSY) and families and to enhance system performance. This session will dynamically highlight the approach, the practice, the innovative solutions, and positive results from this work. Mr. Tuell will provide a roadmap for other jurisdictions to achieve the same positive results.

### **Friday, November 12th from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (EST)**

Panelists from a Franklin County Municipal Court (Specialized Dockets) will present The Role of the Mental Health Court in Ohio, Now and Moving Forward. Panel Members are: The Honorable Cindi Morehart, The Honorable Jodi Thomas and Jill Hillman, Treatment Court Coordinator. This panel will focus on the treatment and rehabilitation efforts being made in Ohio’s mental health courts. There are over 40 certified or courts in active pursuit of certification of mental health courts in Ohio. You can see a map of specialized dockets around the state on the [Ohio Supreme Court’s website](#) and learn more about the [standards](#) that these courts must meet. Moving from incarceration to a treatment-based setting under the guidance of one judge and a multi-disciplinary team frees up needed and expensive jail beds and lets a person progress towards a healthy re-entry to the community. Ohio has been recognized nationally for its leadership in establishing mental health courts and currently has about 244 specialty courts around the state.

### **Presenter Biographies**

**Elizabeth Kelley** is a criminal defense lawyer with a nationwide practice focused on representation and mitigation of people with mental disabilities. Elizabeth co-chairs the Criminal Justice Advisory Panel of The Arc's National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability. She is the editor of *Representing People with Mental Disabilities: A Practical Guide for Criminal Defense Lawyers* (2018), *Representing People with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Practical Guide for Criminal Defense Lawyers* (2020), and *Representing People with Dementia: A Practical Guide for Criminal Defense Lawyers* (scheduled 2021) all published by the American Bar Association (ABA). She is active in the ABA, serving on the Council of the *Criminal Justice Section*, the Editorial Board of *Criminal Justice Magazine*, the Commission on Disability Rights, and the ABA President's Working Group on Building Trust in the American Justice System. She has regularly reviewed books for *The Federal Lawyer* since 2005.

**Neil Gowensmith, PhD** is a core faculty member at the University of Denver's Graduate School of Professional Psychology, teaching exclusively in the Forensic Psychology graduate program. In 2014, he created and became the director of the department's forensic mental health institute, Denver FIRST (The University of Denver's Forensic Institute for Research, Service, and Training). Denver FIRST now operates a postdoctoral fellowship, an outpatient competency restoration program, and a robust forensic evaluation service. Dr. Gowensmith has worked in prisons, jails, courts, community mental health centers, and mental health hospitals throughout his career. From 2006-2012 he served as the Chief of Forensic Services for the State of Hawaii, helping lead Hawaii out of federal oversight and implementing several innovative and evidence-based community forensic policies and programs. He continues to serve as a national expert in forensic mental health, with consultation, research, and practice focusing specifically on outpatient competency restoration, standards for forensic evaluators, conditional release of insanity acquittees, and public forensic mental health systems. He is one of two Special Masters designated by the US District Court (Colorado) to help oversee the transformation of the competency services system in Colorado.

**Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton (Retired)** Born to missionary parents in Bangkok, Thailand, Justice Stratton spent her childhood in Southeast Asia. She attended boarding school in South Vietnam at the height of the Vietnam War and later in Malaysia, visiting America on occasion with her parents. At age 18, she returned to America alone with only a few hundred dollars in her pocket. Working her way through school, she earned a Juris Doctor degree from The Ohio State University College of Law. Justice Stratton announced she would retire at the end of 2012, with three years remaining on her term. In her resignation letter, Justice Stratton referred to her involvement in providing mental health services to offenders and assisting veterans in the criminal justice system as occupying "a place of growing importance in my life and I have decided to dedicate myself to them even more so, not only here in Ohio, but also on a national level." Following her tenure on the Supreme Court, she joined the Columbus office of Vorys, Sater, Seymour & Pease LLP, where she counsels clients on health care, litigation, and appellate work. She began her legal career as a trial lawyer in the courtrooms of Central Ohio. In 1989, she was the first woman to be elected Judge of the Franklin County Common Pleas Court, where she became known as "The Velvet Hammer" for her approach to sentencing in serious felony cases. Her success on the trial bench led to an appointment in 1996 to the Supreme Court of Ohio, where she was elected to a third term in 2008. Justice Stratton also believes that the courts, in partnership with the mental health system, can affect positive change in the lives of many defendants whose mental illness has led to criminal activity. To that end, she formed The Supreme Court of Ohio Advisory Committee on Mental Illness & the Courts, which

is composed of mental health, law enforcement and criminal justice professionals who are dedicated to mental health initiatives in the court system

**Christine Shaynak-Diaz** is an Associate CEO at the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (OACBHA), the statewide organization representing the interests of Ohio's County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health (ADAMH) Boards. Christina is a licensed attorney and earned her Juris Doctor, Master of Social Work and Bachelor of Arts degrees from The Ohio State University. Prior to becoming an Associate CEO at OACBHA, Christina was a sole practitioner for thirteen years specializing in behavioral health law, public agency compliance issues, and state and federal confidentiality laws. Before starting her own legal practice, Christina was the Chief of Legal Affairs and Policy Development for OACBHA for five years. In that role she advised OACBHA on legal matters, addressed legal issues from OACBHA's membership, developed informational materials and gave presentations on confidentiality laws, sunshine laws, ethics laws, and other issues related to compliance with state and federal laws by Ohio's Behavioral Health Boards. She also assisted the Boards in the initial development and implementation of the HIPAA regulations as well as with on-going compliance issues. Christina previously gained experience in the criminal justice system as a social work intern in the Residential Treatment Center at the Orient Corrections Reception Center and a law intern in the Legal Services Division of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's Legal Services. Additionally, she conducted intake interviews for criminal misdemeanor complaints and mediated conflicts between disputing parties as part of the Prosecutor's Mediation Program at the Columbus City Prosecutor's Office

**Robert N. Baker, PhD** is the Forensic Services Director for the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. Since joining OhioMHAS in 1996, he has focused his work on violence risk assessment/risk management tools and processes, training and education, policy development, quality improvement, research, and database management. He has frequently consulted on proposed statutory language. Dr. Baker works closely with the OhioMHAS Regional Psychiatric Hospitals on improving forensically-related programs, policies, and internal processes. He oversees community-based forensic programs such as the Designated Forensic Evaluation Centers, the Forensic Monitoring Program, and the newly-established outpatient competency restoration programs. He provides regular training to mental health providers and court-related personnel on various forensic topics. He is chairperson of the Annual Forensic Conference planning committee and the Forensic Services/Risk Management committee for the OhioMHAS psychiatric hospitals.

**Vicki Montesano, PhD** is the Bureau Chief of Mental Health Treatment at the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. She holds a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Kent State University and is dually licensed as a supervising Professional Clinical Counselor and an Independent Chemical Dependency Counselor in the State of Ohio. Vicki has extensive experience in both direct service and clinical management in community mental health and state psychiatric hospital settings, including educational programming/training, program development, program implementation, supervision, continuous process improvement, process re-engineering, cross-functional team building, and leadership development. Her clinical specialties include first episode psychosis interventions, cognitive behavioral therapy/cognitive behavioral therapy for psychosis, family psychoeducation, cognitive enhancement therapy, motivational interviewing, and co-occurring disorders.

**Betsy Johnson** joined the Treatment Advocacy Center in February 2016. As implementation specialist,

her responsibilities include advocating for the elimination of barriers to the successful treatment of individuals with serious mental illness. This entails helping communities around the country implement effective assisted outpatient treatment (AOT) programs. Previously, Betsy served as the associate executive director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Ohio for over ten years. While there, she helped lead the effort to pass S.B. 43, Ohio's AOT law. Before joining NAMI Ohio, Betsy was the associate CEO of the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities. She has also worked for the Ohio Departments of Job and Family Services and Youth Services, and served as a legislative aide in the Ohio Senate. Prior to moving to Columbus, Ohio, Betsy worked in Washington, D.C., for a Member of Congress. Betsy earned her degree in Political Science from the University of Houston.

**John Tuell, M.A.** has over 40 years of executive, management, and practitioner experience, and has extensive expertise and leadership in juvenile justice operations and reform. He is currently the Executive Director for the Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice. Since 2013 he has been responsible for managerial oversight of all activities of the RFK National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice and for all technical assistance and training inquiries related to primary focus areas of youth justice transformation, probation and juvenile justice system reform, dual status youth, and information and data sharing. He serves as Senior Consultant for field-based technical assistance. He oversees all Center activities related to technical assistance, establishment of practice networks, distance learning events, development of publication resources, and coordination with practice and funding partners. Mr. Tuell has also worked with the MacArthur Foundation, Juvenile Justice Models for Change Initiative and for the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

**The Honorable Cindi Morehart**, Franklin County Municipal Court Judge, presides over a regular Court docket and also the specialized Mental Health Court Program known as L.I.N.C. The primary objective and responsibility of the L.I.N.C. is to find treatment and alternatives to jail time for the County's mentally ill offenders. Her academic background includes a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Art Education from The Ohio State University, J.D. from Capital University Law School, and admittance to practice in 1992. She was a Prosecutor for the City of Columbus from 1992 to 1995 and was a Senior Prosecutor for the Franklin County Prosecutor's office from 1995 to 2002. Judge Morehart served as a Magistrate to the Domestic and Juvenile Relations Court from November 2002 until December 2015.

**The Honorable Jodi Thomas**, Franklin County Municipal Court Judge, is a lifelong resident of Franklin County and attended The Ohio State University where she earned her bachelor's degree and license in social work. Judge Thomas received her Juris Doctorate in May of 2001 from Capital University Law School. She went on to spend 14 years as an attorney for the Franklin County Public Defender's Office, where she trained and supervised new attorneys. During her last five years at the Public Defender's Office, Judge Thomas was assigned to the Franklin County Specialized Dockets as the lead attorney. Current Specialized Docket programs include: **L.I.N.C., Military and Veterans Services, CATCH, h.a.r.t., and Recovery Court.** Prior to joining the bench, Judge Thomas dedicated her career to helping victims of human trafficking, veterans, and those experiencing mental health issues and drug addiction. She has been recognized for her work and has received the following honors: ADAMH Attorney of the Year Mental Health Court, Excellent Service Award Alcohol and Drug Addiction Program, Rise to the Challenge Award Military and Veterans Service Program, ADAMH Attorney of the Year Opiate Extension Program/Alcohol and Drug Addiction Program, and Model of Justice Award from the Justice League of Ohio.

**Jill Hillman** holds a BA in Public Relations from Capital University. She spent several years working in higher education alumni relations at the undergraduate and graduate levels and then later focused her career on communications and marketing in the non-profit sector. More importantly though, Jill is also a woman in recovery and a graduate of the Franklin County Municipal Court's Specialized Dockets. More than 10 years ago, her addiction and mental health issues sent her "perfect life" on a downward spiral, leading her to a world of fear, shame, hopelessness, and justice-involved activity. Thankfully, her arrests lead her to the Specialized Dockets where she was given the support, accountability and resources needed, to begin a new life journey. Jill is currently a coordinator for Franklin County Municipal Court's specialized docket, HART (Helping Achieve Recovery Together), where she walks alongside participants as they too, enter a new life journey. She serves on the Supreme Court of Ohio's Franklin County Specialty Docket Advisory Board and the Franklin County Reentry Advisory Board.

**Lisa Gordish, PhD, Moderator:** Dr. Lisa Gordish received her doctorate in clinical psychology from Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida in 1997. She provided trauma treatment in an outpatient Sexual Abuse Survivor's Program in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and provided clinical services within the Metro Dade Police Department in Miami, Florida after Hurricane Andrew in 1992. She subsequently worked in an outpatient anxiety disorders clinic and an intensive outpatient substance abuse program. She worked as a clinical and forensic psychologist at Twin Valley Behavioral Healthcare in Columbus Ohio from 1999-2016. She is currently a Forensic Coordinator at the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addictions Services. Dr. Gordish's clinical interests include forensic psychology, trauma, and substance abuse.