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Victim Advocacy, Legislative Project Development

Profile

- Broad based field experience in the development and management of victim services including crisis intervention and case management with focus on adults and the elderly. Advocacy with victims of violent crime to assist navigation through the justice system.
- Specialization in support group facilitation, effective legislation and the process of the legislature; consultant and trial escort for surviving victims of crime; legislative project development, creation and proposition of legislation at the state level; advanced advocacy training; seminar and conference presentations. I voluntarily provide editor and writer services for advocacy groups.
- Highly skilled in clinical speech language pathology with concentration on disabled adults; diagnostics and implementation of treatments.

Career Experience

Human Services Advocate, Eldercare Assistant and Project Coordinator
State of Connecticut Services for the Blind/BESB; Department of Social Services, Hartford, CT
June 2000-Present

Presently employed as Human Services Advocate where I provide extensive case management and crisis intervention services, particularly for retired, elderly clients. Responsible as medical social worker, for legally blind adults, 45 to 80 years old, with little or no family support. Clients exhibit multiple disabilities, medical, personal and socio-economic problems.

Clients receive dedicated care, including a full spectrum of services from initial employment advocacy to coordination of social services, problem solving assistance, emotional support, medical, housing, insurance and nursing home needs.

Licensure and Certification

Current Connecticut Speech-Language Pathology License

Certificate of Clinical Competence (C.C.C.) issued by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association/ASHA

Disability Training: Office of Protection & Advocacy, Hartford, CT

Formal training for businesses and corporations, to demonstrate how to create an integrated, accepting environment, increase awareness and sensitivity of disability issues and knowledge of ADA statutes.

Eldercare Assistant: Connecticut Homecare Program for Elders/Department of Social Services

Structure and program development for the Unit; response to client calls involving clinical judgment, problem solving and case analysis; references to community providers and a major force in Self-Directed Care's significant caseload growth. I am responsible for the creation of a better overall organizational flow and more professionally written materials.

Special Project

- Creator and developer of "Dementia Calendar Game", a prototype ready for manufacturing and nationwide sales. Target populations include mild to moderate dementia, cognitively impaired adults/adolescents and children.
- Purpose: To improve orientation and attention skills, time/calendar concepts, ability to formulate and respond to questions; improve one to one correspondence, eye-hand coordination and social pragmatic skills.

Project Coordinator: Division of Legislation, Regulation and Communications with Staff Attorney

Provider of legal research and analysis, reports on legislative affairs affecting growing client group; regulatory reform planning, quality assurance and policy research; monitor of all legislation impacting agencies and clients; designation as Major Event Planner for CT State Agency to include older adults making significant contributions to the blind community.

Legislative Projects:

Testimony with Attorney General Blumenthal, February 2007, Real Estate & Insurance Committee; Bill 7055, Concerning Standardizing Definition of "Medical Necessity" and Re-assigning Decision Making Power to Physicians; Invitation to Bill Signing by Governor M. Jodi Rell.

Conception and proposal of Legislation, Connecticut General Assembly, October 2002
Testimony to increase physical therapy insurance coverage to adults with selected chronic disabilities; criteria-based system introduction to prevent premature decrease in mobility and admission to care facilities such as cerebral palsy.

Event Development Projects:

Creation and implementation of a five year \$1 million budget for anti-tobacco PR campaign and long range event plan for adolescents linking blindness and smoking to current medical research; Media communications, public relations, extensive policy research, agency newsletter publishing.

Event Director of First Annual BESB Scholarship Program;

Facilitate meetings for Audio Description for the Blind in collaboration with Yale Repertory Theater.

Speech-Language Pathologist

Completion of Contract services to the following agencies:

- Massachusetts Easter Seal Society, Springfield, MA
- The Children's Language Institute, Ludlow, MA
- Mount Sinai Hospital & St. Francis Hospital, Hartford, CT
- Connecticut Therapies, Inc., contract to several hospitals, nursing homes and group homes
- Masonic Geriatric Health Care Center, Wallingford, CT
- Consulting Therapist, Springerville, AZ
- Shelton Memorial Hospital, Shelton, CT

Consulting Experience

Connecticut Commission on Victim Services. Consultant on victimization for report "Services to Families of Homicide Survivors"

Survivors of Homicide, Inc. Board Member and Officer; Support group facilitator; Editor and writer of organization's newsletter.

Homicide Victim Families Consulting with surviving family members to provide resources and emotional support; acts as escort to murder trials and educate family members on the judicial process in Hartford Superior Court.

Training in Educational Equity for Women with Physical Limitations, a Model Study Federal Grant Proposal, Kansas State University

Project Management Experience

2009 Master of Ceremonies for BESB Agency Awards with homicide survivor, renowned endocrinologist & diabetes expert, Dr. William A. Petit, Jr.

San Diego/ Imperial Valley Upward Bound Vocational/Motivational Speaker/Fund Raiser
Execution of multi modality presentation to Imperial Valley/San Diego Upward Bound students in Summer Residential Academic Program

Conferences/Events

National Organization of Victim Assistance (NOVA), Speaker
Upward Bound Residential Program, San Diego Imperial Valley, Speaker
CUE Center for Missing Persons National Conference, Speaker
Newington Children's Hospital, Parent's Support Group, Speaker
Melanie I. Rieger Memorial Conference, Attendee 15 years
University of Connecticut Law Class, "LadyJustice and the Legal System," Speaker

Memberships

National Center for Victims of Crime
National Organization of Victim Assistance (NOVA)
Board Member PFLAG, Hartford, CT
Founder & President, Students for Handicapped Concerns, Kansas State University

Education

Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS
M.A., Speech Pathology/Communication Disorders

Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, CT
B.A., Speech Pathology/Communication Disorders

Hartford College for Women, Hartford, CT
A.A. Liberal Arts

Specialized Training: "Sensitivity Training for Persons with Disabilities by Melissa Marshall, State Department of Protection and Advocacy

Numerous certificates of participation in National and State sponsored courses in Victim Services

Awards

Isidore Wise Memorial Fund, Newington Children's Hospital, awarded twice

The scholarship fund was established through a generous bequest from Mr. Isidore Wise, a member of the Newington Children's Hospital Board of Directors for 45 years. Since 1996, the medical center has stewarded these funds by awarding educational scholarships to worthy students who have an association with Newington Children's Hospital, Connecticut Children's or the CCMC School.

Current Contributions

Victim Impact Statement Assistance Service

A service program for crime victims and offers her assistance in creating a cohesive victim impact statement tailored to the individuals and their cases.

Host of popular internet broadcast, ***Shattered Lives***, dedicated to featuring victims in the aftermath of their crime survival and offering resources to listeners from expert guests and organization representatives.

Contributor to popular social issue and victim rights oriented sites, Time's Up and Here Women Talk, as well as relative articles for personal website, DonnaGore.Com.

Research and communications assistance for ImaginePublicity, a Social Media Marketing company located in Myrtle Beach, SC since October 2010.