



**NAVIGATING SAFE HARBORS**

**NARSOL**  
18TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**JUNE 25-28, 2026 - BALTIMORE, MARYLAND**



# Welcome

## to NARSOL'S 18th Annual Conference

NARSOL's conferences provide vibrant opportunities to connect with a diverse community of researchers, mental health professionals, criminal justice experts, and dedicated advocates. Together, we are committed to reshaping public perceptions of individuals formerly convicted of sexually-based offenses and reforming the laws and policies that affect registered people and their families.

The 2026 conference kicks off on Thursday evening with an informal meet-and-greet and unfolds through Sunday at noon. Throughout the weekend, you can look forward to exciting events such as a lively Friday night festival and our elegant, annual Saturday evening awards banquet.

Our carefully curated workshops and plenary sessions are designed to enrich your expertise. Whether you're eager to master litigation strategies, refine your legislative lobbying techniques, launch impactful support groups, or enhance your leadership skills, our expert presenters are here to guide you.

Beyond the sessions, there's plenty of time to mingle and share insights with fellow advocates. We're excited to welcome you to Baltimore, Maryland, and hope the 2026 national conference inspires new ideas, collaborations, and a renewed commitment to change.



in collaboration with



**National Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws (NARSOL)**  
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# 2026 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

		Calvert A	Calvert B	Calvert D
<b>Thursday</b>				
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm	Early Registration	Early Registration - Calvert Ballroom Lobby Area		
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm		MEET & GREET - Rooftop Bar		
<b>Friday</b>				
7:45 am	Registration Open	Registration Table Opens		
8:30 am		Opening Remarks & Announcements		
9:00 am - 10:15 am		Miriam Auckerman		
Break		15 minute break		
10:30 am - 11:45 am		Grief Without Witness	How AI Tools Can Help Our Advocacy	Strategic Messaging & Sex Offense Policy
11:45 am - 1:15 pm		LUNCH BREAK (90 minutes)		
1:15 pm - 2:30 pm		Building and Growing Impactful Relationships with Policy Makers (NARSOL Govt Relations Team)	Legal Claims that Work: Preparing Your Case	The Value of Women-Forced-to-Register's Experiences...
Break		15 minute break		
2:45 pm - 4:00 pm		Shawn Barrera-Leaf		
Break		15 minute break		
4:15 pm - 5:30 pm	Quaternary Prevention: Moving from Moral Panic to Compassion	Create Your Own Assisted Living & End of Life Care	Working with Reality: Employment After A Sex Conviction	
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Dinner & Social Time (120 minutes)			
7:30 pm	FRIDAY NIGHT FESTIVITIES & Festival			
<b>Saturday</b>				
8:30 am	Registration Open	Registration Table Opens		
8:45 am		Opening Remarks & Announcements		
9:00 am - 10:15 am		Peter Dross		
Break		15 minute break		
10:30 am - 11:45 am		Lepers, Lies, and Lineage	Self Employment as Survival & Strategy	The Three-Minute Advocate: Tactics for Lobbying & Media
11:45 am - 1:00 pm		LUNCH BREAK (75 minutes)		
1:00 pm		Catherine Carpenter		
2:15 pm		15 minute break		
2:30 pm - 3:45 pm		FOIA in Practice: How Federal Records Shape Safety and Policy	Political Strategies to Reform and End Sex Offense Civil Commitment Programs	Film Screening: "Predators" in Calvert C
4:00 pm - 5:15 pm		Beyond the Label: Rebuilding Life Through Resilience and Entrepreneurship	Experience a Fearless Support Group Meeting	
Break	Pre-Dinner Break			
6:30 pm - 9:00 pm	AWARDS BANQUET - Calvert Ballroom			
<b>Sunday</b>				
9:00 am - 10:15 am	Registration Open	Grant Hill		
Break		15 minute break		
10:30 am - 11:45 am		A Replicable, Community-driven "Circles of Support and Accountability" Mentor Model Built on Lived Experience	NARSOL Legal Committee Panel: "Dismantling the Registry State: Constitutional Litigation in Action"	

## WELCOME FROM THE NARSOL BOARD CHAIR



**Robin W. Vander Wall**  
Chair, NARSOL  
President, *Vivante Espero*

Welcome to NARSOL's eighteenth national conference!

My first conference in Los Angeles in 2013 transformed my advocacy journey; after four years of supporting our cause from afar, I went from being a close friend and strong supporter to someone with both a face and a space to fill. I had finally found a true community.

NARSOL's 2026 conference planning and operations teams have worked hard to provide you with an inspiring program filled with engaging workshops, dynamic plenaries, and ample opportunities to connect with your fellow advocates and supportive partners.

Whether you traveled here by car, plane, or you're already part of this community, we encourage you to share your stories and build lasting relationships. On behalf of our entire team, welcome to Baltimore, Maryland. May this conference empower and transform you as my first one did me.

### Designing Your Vision, Shaping Your Brand

- 01 Brand Identity Design
- 02 Marketing Collateral
- 03 Web Design & Social Media Graphics
- 04 Packaging Design

*Special pricing for NARSOL friends and affiliates*

Welcome to NARSOL's Annual Conference 2026

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**UV4SOR**  
*Fiercely advocating with integrity for the human rights of individuals impacted by sex offense laws.*

Coalition Member

## Friday PLENARIES



**Miriam Auckerman, Esq.**  
Senior staff attorney at the ACLU of Michigan

### Lessons from Michigan: The Does I, II and III Litigation

Ms. Auckerman will discuss the history of the Does litigation and parallel state litigation. She will talk about what they learned about strategy, both on the litigation and policy side.

Miriam Aukerman is a senior staff attorney at the ACLU of Michigan and litigates on a broad range of civil liberties issues, with a particular focus on immigrant rights, poverty, and criminal law. She has litigated registry cases for several decades, most notably *Does I v. Snyder*, a precedent-setting case finding Michigan's sex offender registry is unconstitutionally punitive; *Does II v. Snyder*, a class action that applied *Does I* to all Michigan registrants; and *Does III v. Whitmer*, a challenge to Michigan's new registry law after it was amended in response to the earlier litigation.

Before joining the ACLU in 2010, Miriam worked with Legal Aid of Western Michigan as both a Soros Justice Fellow and then as the founding director of the Reentry Law Project. She graduated summa cum laude from both Cornell University and the New York University Law School, was a Keasbey Scholar at Oxford University, and clerked on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit for Judge Pierre Leval. She has been recognized as a 2024 Michigan Lawyers Weekly Leader in the Law; 2021 Crain's Notable Women in Law; 2018 State Bar of Michigan Champion of Justice; a 2018 American Immigration Lawyers Pro Bono Champion; a 2017 Opportunity Agenda Fellow, and 2012 and 2018 honoree of the Criminal Defense Attorneys of Michigan.



**Shawn Barrera-Leaf**  
Executive director of United Voices 4 Sex Offense Reform (UV4SOR) and board member of CURE-SORT

### An Unlikely Advocate

What happens when an ordinary life collides with the realities of the criminal justice system and lifelong collateral consequences? Through personal storytelling, reflection, and community-driven insight, Shawn Barrera-Leaf shares her unexpected journey from small-town wife, mother, and community member to national advocate and executive director of UV4SOR. "An Unlikely Advocate" explores the emotional disruption families experience following a sexual harm conviction, the grief and isolation that often follow, and the transformation that can emerge through advocacy, education, and connection.

Founded during the uncertainty and isolation of the COVID era, UV4SOR grew from a simple online call for families to stop suffering in silence and begin building community together. What began as a small support network evolved into a national advocacy organization focused on bridging the journey from pretrial through incarceration, reentry, and registry impact. At the heart of UV4SOR's mission is the belief that advocacy is not one-size-fits-all, and that meaningful change often comes from people who never imagined themselves stepping into advocacy at all. By weaving together lived experience, coalition-building, community voices, and examples of "unlikely advocates" in action, Shawn challenges audiences to broaden the definition of advocacy itself—moving beyond echo chambers and toward shared values rooted in humanity, redemption, accountability, prevention, and hope. This presentation invites attendees to recognize that some of the most impactful voices for change are often the ones who never planned to speak at all.

Shawn Barrera-Leaf is executive director of United Voices 4 Sex Offense Reform (UV4SOR). In 2017, her life changed overnight when her son was convicted of a sex offense. What began as a mother searching for answers quickly evolved into a deeper understanding of the far-reaching impact of America's criminal legal system. As she navigated the collateral consequences facing

her family, Shawn witnessed firsthand how policies intended to promote safety can create instability, isolation, and lifelong barriers that extend far beyond a single conviction. Determined to transform pain into purpose, Shawn stepped into advocacy—first in support spaces, then in legislative offices, and ultimately on national platforms. Alongside other impacted families and advocates, she helped build and now leads UV4SOR, a nationally recognized, collaborative platform focused on elevating impacted voices and advancing thoughtful, evidence-based policy modernization. Her work bridges families, survivor-centered stakeholders, lawmakers, and advocacy partners in pursuit of solutions grounded in research, accountability, and community safety.

In addition to her leadership with UV4SOR, Shawn serves as a board member of CURE-SORT, sits on the Steering Committee of the National Coalition Against Conviction Registries (NCACR), and is a PARSOL advisory board member. She is also an active stakeholder in Michigan’s Grand Traverse County Quick Response Team (QRT) Task Force, reflecting her commitment to local engagement alongside national strategy. Shawn brings to the stage both lived experience and policy insight, grounded in the belief that meaningful public safety is strengthened through collaboration, education, and informed action. Often describing herself as “an unlikely advocate,” she challenges audiences to consider how personal experience can become purposeful leadership—and how collective courage can move advocacy from conversation to measurable change.

### Sex Registry & SORNA Services

We work with clients and families to help them understand the complexities of SORNA. Our team works with clients throughout the country and provides a variety of services for PFRs and their families including;

- International Travel Guidance
- State to State Relocation Assistance
- Jail & Prison Preparation
- Understanding Parole & Probation as a Registrant

### Other Services

- Focus Groups
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- Parole Preparation
- Re-entry Support

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# Saturday PLENARIES



**Peter Dross**

Retired vice president of external relations of the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) after a 32 year career

## The Most Toxic Political Issue I Have Ever Encountered

Mr. Dross will provide an overview of the Minnesota Sex Offender Program (MSOP), Minnesota’s sex offense civil commitment program. He will provide a brief history of this “treatment program,” which now indefinitely detains about 750 people and costs Minnesota taxpayers \$126 million annually (more than \$1.3 billion since 2012 alone). He will argue that MSOP is an outlier among the 20 states that have sex offense civil commitment programs, detaining far more people per capita and releasing among the fewest (one is nearly five times more likely to die in MSOP than be released from it). He will describe efforts to reform MSOP over its more than 30-year history and how the political toxicity of the issue has stymied those efforts. Dross will outline current strategies aimed at reducing the size of the detainee population and improving living conditions—while working toward the ultimate goal of carefully closing MSOP over a multi-year period and reinvesting the funds in proven and promising approaches to preventing sexual violence.

Peter (Pete) Dross retired at the end of 2025 after a 32-year career with the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT), a nongovernmental organization that is the largest of its kind in the world. He served as vice president of external relations, providing leadership to CVT’s policy advocacy, fundraising, and communications programs. Dross has led successful issue and legislative advocacy campaigns on both state and federal levels that have enjoyed broad and bipartisan support. Dross now facilitates the Government Relations Working Group for the \$100 Million Committee, a volunteer group named for the annual cost of Minnesota’s sex offense civil commitment program, the Minnesota Sex Offender Program (the actual cost is \$126 million in 2026). The \$100 Million Committee supports the central conclusion of a report issued 18 months ago by the Mitchell Hamline School of Law: MSOP is a failed program that has had no discernible impact on the incidence of sexual violence in Minnesota and should be carefully closed over a multi-year period with the funds reinvested in proven and promising approaches to preventing sexual violence.



**Catherine Carpenter, Esq.**

The Arleigh M. Woods and William T. Woods chair and Professor Emerita at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles and current executive director of Access to Restorative Justice (ARJ)

## Crafting Sticky Messaging: Strategies for our Movement

This presentation offers lessons and strategies from social scientists on how to craft messages that cut through the noise of the false narratives regarding those who have committed sex offenses. Inspired by Malcolm Gladwell’s book, *The Tipping Point*, the talk will showcase six principles and examples used to create messaging that sticks.

Professor Catherine L. Carpenter is the Arleigh M. Woods and William T. Woods chair and Professor Emerita at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles. She is also the past president of Alliance for Constitutional Sex Offense Laws (ACSOL) and current executive director of Access to Restorative Justice (ARJ), which strives for reintegration of the marginalized through education and legal advocacy.

Professor Carpenter’s scholarly focus centers on the injustice of sex offense registration laws. Her work has been cited by courts, law professors, and attorneys who advocate to overturn the laws. Her most recent article, entitled “Panicked Legislation,” describes the moral pandemic that has gripped the public and which has produced runaway and ill-serving laws against those who commit sex offenses. This publication was recognized by the majority of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in *Commonwealth v. Torslieri*, and it was relied on by the dissent in its powerful rejoinder. An earlier piece entitled “All Except For” criticizes the criminal justice reform movement for its systematic exclusion of those who have committed sex offenses from the sweeping benefits offered by the reforms. And as further evidence of the impact of Professor Carpenter’s scholarship, Maryland overturned its registration laws in 2014 on ex post facto grounds, citing to Professor Carpenter’s work in so doing.

# Saturday Awards Banquet Address



**Amber Vlangas**  
Executive director of the Restorative Action Alliance and the donor engagement officer with the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut

A survivor of sexual harm and member of a system-impacted family, Amber's work is grounded in lived experience and a commitment to prevention, restorative approaches, civil liberties, and evidence-based criminal legal reform.

After serving in the United States Marine Corps, Amber has spent more than 25 years in nonprofit outreach, organizing, coalition-building, and resource development. She co-founded the Restorative Action Alliance and Restorative Action Foundation--complementary organizations that are dedicated to ending sexual violence and systemic injustice.

She has inspired audiences across the country at rallies, legislative hearings, town halls, guest lectures, and trainings. Her speaking and facilitation focus on civil liberties, restorative justice, survivor support, storytelling, community dialogue, and sustainable advocacy, with an emphasis on empowering people to move from awareness to collective action. She serves on the Steering Committee of the National Association Against Conviction Registries (NACR), co-hosts the podcast Amplified Voices, serves on the PARSOL Advisory Board, and has served on legislatively appointed task forces designed to address the collateral consequences of criminal legal system involvement.

Amber is also a visual artist, poet, and facilitator of mindful, meditative art and sound-based experiences. She developed the Many Truths program to explore art as a form of advocacy, using creative expression to foster empathy, break down false dichotomies, spark dialogue, and help communities engage with complex social issues in more human and accessible ways.

# Sunday PLENARY



**Grant Hill**  
Candidate for the House of Representatives in Iowa

## From Cell Block to Ballot Box: Defying Labels and Demanding a Seat at the Table

Society tells us that once you have a conviction, your life is over. We are told to disappear, to stay silent, and to accept the label of "sex offender" as the sum total of our existence. Mr. Hill refused to accept that. In this session, he decided to stop letting society keep him down and instead did something radical with his life. Instead of hiding in the shadows, he decided to build a life of radical visibility and action.

It started with a choice to serve; he founded the nonprofit 1 Love Legacy to demonstrate that God's love is for everybody--no exceptions. He then reclaimed his voice through the Legacy Unchained podcast, creating a platform for those the system tries to silence.

But speaking out wasn't enough; he needed to act. In this presentation, Grant will discuss his work as a lobbyist at the Capitol, fighting directly for legislative reform. Most importantly, he will talk about why he is currently running for the house of representatives. His campaign is not just about winning a seat; it is about starting a difficult conversation that the public tries to avoid. Grant is turning a public registry into a platform for public office and proving that your past does not disqualify you from shaping the future. This presentation is a blueprint for how to transition from surviving the system to leading the community. Come learn how to stop hiding and start building a legacy that cannot be chained.



Ohioians for Rational Sex Offense Laws

## Welcome, 2026 NARSOL Conference Participants.

Your Ohio friends and allies stand in alliance with you. We invite Ohio residents to join us at [OHRsol.com](https://OHRsol.com).

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## MISSOURI ALLIANCE FOR FAMILY RESTORATION

Our professional lobbyists educate lawmakers and influence MO state legislation.

- We are supporting bills to restore the Path for Removal from the MO registry in the 2026 legislative session.
- We are fighting to stop harmful bills that will have terrible consequences for all MO registrants.

Please JOIN and SUPPORT US!  
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## FROM RSOL TO NARSOL: A brief history of our cause

The National Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws (NARSOL) has its roots in the late 1990s when a group of Boston area civil libertarians, educators, and professionals voiced concern over laws driven by panic rather than facts. Their initial "Call," signed by over 100 professionals, aimed to spark dialogue about protecting children while upholding civil liberties.

By 2006, concerns had deepened, prompting a revised statement. In July 2007, Paul Shannon, a longtime peace activist, published "*It's Time to Reform Sex Offender Laws*" in *Counterpunch*, officially launching Reform Sex Offender Laws (RSOL). Among its founders was "Alex Marbury," formerly involved in a controversial sexual rights organization. Though some criticized his past, his awareness helped ensure that his former group's ideology didn't influence RSOL's direction.

RSOL focused on the post-conviction treatment of those with sexual offense convictions and consistently opposed all illegal sexual behavior. It grew by adopting bylaws, a mission, key assertions, and forming a board and committees. It has affiliates across the U.S. In 2016, the name was rebranded from RSOL to NARSOL, signaling a move away from stigmatizing language. Next month, July, will be NARSOL's eighteenth birthday.

Even though the name was changed, even though many years have gone by, NARSOL's mission is the same. The organization remains committed to challenging unjust laws and public policies rooted in myth, not fact. With increasing support from academics, lawmakers, and courts, NARSOL sees hope for meaningful reform rooted in dignity, redemption, and justice for all.



# TexasVoices

FOR REASON AND JUSTICE  
TEXASVOICES.ORG



Greetings from the great state of Texas to everyone in Baltimore for NARSOL's 18th national conference!

## Pursuing Rational Laws and Policies

Texas Voices For Reason & Justice • P.O. Box 23539 • San Antonio, Texas 78223

## One Standard of Justice ★ CT

### Celebrates



- ★ NARSOL's 18th Conference
- ★ OSJ's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- ★ Birth of OSJ Action
  - Our Political Action 501c4
- ★ Bipartisan Passage of SB509
  - A bill overhauling address verifications

Each step you take reveals a new horizon. You have taken the first step today. Now I challenge you to take another.

-Dan Poynter



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PROVIDING THE HIGHEST QUALITY  
OF CRIMINAL LEGAL DEFENSE

## Grief without witness: healing, moral injury, and reclaiming self

**Kristie Torbick**

Participants will gain a deeper understanding of disenfranchised grief through the lens of lived experience and directly impacted communities. They will learn how hidden and unacknowledged losses shape identity, relationships, and healing; and how trauma-informed and restorative approaches can support individuals and families carrying invisible grief. Through storytelling and reflection, participants will identify language for their own unspoken losses, explore practices for witnessing grief in themselves and others, and leave with practical tools for creating spaces where marginalized grief can be named, honored, and held with compassion.

## How AI tools can help your advocacy

**Brian Garrett**

This presentation offers a simple, practical introduction to everyday AI tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and similar platforms. Designed for beginners, it explains what these tools do and how they can help with writing, research, organizing ideas, and preparing advocacy materials as well as what their limits are. Attendees will see real-world examples, learn basic tips for getting useful results, and gain guidance on ethical and responsible use. No technical background is required—this session focuses on clarity, confidence, and practical takeaways attendees can use immediately.

## Strategic messaging and sex offense policy

**John Dawe, Vicky Campo & Brenda Jones**

This workshop equips volunteer advocates with a practical, unified messaging framework they can apply immediately in testimony, community conversations, coalition outreach, and media engagement. Participants will learn not only what to say but also why certain approaches work and which common mistakes to avoid.

## Building and growing impactful relationships with policy makers

**Monica Reid, David Smith, and Brian Garrett**

Effective government relations hinge on the RELATIONSHIP part of the advocacy process. Attendees will learn from experienced government relations professionals how to build meaningful connections that establish and grow support for registry modernization and sex offense policy at the local, state, and federal levels. Additionally, they will learn how to mobilize a small, committed group of concerned citizens to change the world.

## Legal claims that work: preparing your case

**Stephen Herto**

What registration complaints are working in today's legal landscape? This workshop will include a comprehensive review of viable claims for registration litigation. What exactly makes a good legal, impactful case for civil rights violations? What pitfalls do plaintiffs fall into that get their claims dismissed? Q and A to follow.

## The value of women-forced-to-register experiences to advocacy and prevention

**Danell Puglisi-Knutson**

This presentation will focus on the value to advocacy and the prevention of sexual harm of the lived experiences and perspectives of women forced to register. Participants will learn how forming and participating in the SHINE-VOICES Women Forced to Register group has created a safe space for us to grow and develop our self-advocacy. Finding our "SHINE" has allowed us to advocate for each other and extend our advocacy to ALL persons directly and indirectly impacted by sexual harm and the registry. We believe inclusive empowerment of all voices sharing truth is essential to change the narrative about persons on the registry, the prevention of sexual harm, and community safety.

## Quaternary prevention: moving from moral panic to compassion

**Richard Kramer & Theresa Robertson**

Quaternary prevention means ensuring that treatments "do no harm." But several aspects of mandated treatment for those who've committed sexual crimes are based on moral panic rather than rational understanding, causing unnecessary harm and injustice to those receiving treatment and to others. Attendees will learn to distinguish moral panics from rational reactions to danger, and then by engaging with actual treatment materials, they will see how certain components result from moral panic, ignore important realities, and contradict accepted therapeutic, scientific, and ethical principles. Then they'll consider alternatives and strategies for reform, including the use of storytelling and compassion—necessary components for action.

## Create your own assisted living and end-of-life care

**Bruce Hossfield**

Establishing assisted living for persons required to be on sex offense registries who are our friends and loved ones is challenging. The location must meet zoning rules, residency regulations, and presence restrictions all at the same time. Also desirable is a licensed provider of good will who will accept registrants, not in a segregated facility but as part of their general population. Session participants will learn how to find such a location and how to solicit for a service provider that meets your specific needs.

## Working with reality: employment after a sex conviction

**Jason Wasserman**

This is a practical, trauma-informed workshop for individuals with significant legal and social barriers navigating the job market. Rather than offering false promises, the session focuses on realistic opportunity, emotional stamina, and strategic persistence. Participants learn where employment is actually possible, how to stay steady during a long and discouraging search, and how to move from being overwhelmed to action. The workshop combines lived experience with professional insight and concludes with concrete next steps, industries, and resources that participants can use immediately.

## Navigate the Complexities. Know Your Rights.

When the laws are complicated, finding the right information shouldn't be. NARSOL provides a central hub for the resources you need to live informed and prepared.

What you will find on **NARSOL.org**:

- A blog with helpful info and updates on impactful events and decisions.
- A wiki (statewiki.narsol.org) with answers to FAQs about state laws and advocacy.
- A resource repository (resources.narsol.org) with a host of helpful links to everything from re-entry to research.

**Visit online today and learn how to be more involved in this important work!**



## SAFE HOUSE Tallahassee

**My goals: Quality Elder Care, Open to All**

I own a facility in Tallahassee, FL that meets local zoning and Florida conviction registry residency & presence requirements to be a small (8 residents) Assisted Living / Elder Care / Memory Care facility

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Responders must demonstrate staff and financial capability to provide services including:

Adult day care, assisted living, behavior mgmt, meal prep, homemaker service, hospice care, individual care plan, memory care, personal care, respite care, transportation services, registry compliance assistance and advocacy

Willingness to accept persons forced to register by the state of Florida, including myself, as up to 25% of residents through a fair and open screening process. So-called "registry violations" will never be counted against an applicant for residence.

Reply to: [safehousetally@gmail.com](mailto:safehousetally@gmail.com)

NCRSOL warmly welcomes you to Baltimore, MD for NARSOL's eighteenth national conference!

[ncrsol.org](http://ncrsol.org)  
P.O. Box 25423  
Raleigh, NC 27611

## SATURDAY WORKSHOPS by order of presentation

### Lepers, lies and lineage

Joseph F. Nehls

This session is about tracing the roots of harm without hiding from responsibility. Participants will look at how shame, secrecy, and distorted ideas of love get passed down, shaping behavior long before a crime occurs. This is not about blame, excuses, or minimizing impact. It is about understanding the conditions that formed us so the cycle can stop with us. The session invites honest reflection, shared language, and practical insight into accountability, risk reduction, and healing. The goal is simple but hard: Tell the truth, own the damage, and choose a different legacy.

### Self-employment as survival and strategy

Jeremy Burnworth

When traditional employment shuts doors, entrepreneurship becomes more than an option; it becomes survival. Jeremy shares his journey from business owner to incarceration, where he developed and taught an entrepreneurship curriculum that later inspired BreakIT, a trauma-informed incubator for justice-impacted individuals. This session explores why this work is necessary, what actually works in practice, and how to build a business despite stigma, restrictions, and instability. Blending lived experience with real-world strategy, participants will gain tools to move from isolation to economic agency.

### FOIA in practice: how federal records shape safety and policy

Jacob Stone

This workshop provides a practical, first-person guide to using FOIA and the Privacy Act for responsible, safety-focused advocacy. Participants will learn what FOIA covers (and does not) and how to draft effective requests, understand exemptions, request fee waivers, and navigate appeals, mediation, and, if needed, litigation. Using real case examples and aggregate data, the session shows how federal records can inform discussions on incarceration, sentencing, and policy without exposing individuals. The focus is on ethical data use, realistic expectations, and leveraging transparency tools to support evidence-based advocacy within the NARSOL community.

### Political strategies to reform and end sex offense civil commitment

Peter Dross

In this workshop we will discuss and share strategies for building partisan support for strategies aimed at reducing the size of detainee populations in sex offender civil commitment programs and ultimately ending these programs altogether. Discussion topics will include (but not be limited to): building bipartisan support; avoiding election-based barriers; messaging; media relations; engaging with program leadership and governance officials; litigation; and working with government relations firms. There is no magic strategy, so this workshop will be aimed at sharing information on proven and promising approaches. The objective is for participants to learn from each other and generate ideas for use in local contexts.

### Beyond the label: rebuilding life through resilience and entrepreneurship

Andrew Kiser

This session explores how mental health recovery and entrepreneurship overcome the disruptions of the registry. Andrew shares his ten-year journey through career loss, depression, and a collapsed marriage to find success through healing. By leveraging 12-step programs and therapy to address addiction and grief, he rebuilt his life and self-worth. The workshop provides restorative tools for self-forgiveness and building healthy social networks. Participants will learn how to pivot from failure toward dignity-driven business opportunities that foster self-reliance and create community employment, proving that internal restoration is the foundation for navigating life with a label.

### Experience a fearless support group meeting

Kathie Gourlay

This workshop is for people who have a sex offense conviction, their family, and their friends. Attendees will be introduced to NARSOL Fearless support groups and will participate in one. Kathie incorporates restorative, peacemaking principles and techniques to create a safe, supportive environment where all participants will have a chance to speak and be listened to.

Special screening of the film  
*Predators* with moderated  
post-film discussion.  
2:30pm to 5:15pm on Saturday



## SUNDAY WORKSHOPS

### A replicable, community-driven COSA (Circles of Support and Accountability) mentor model built on lived experience

Andrea Travers

This workshop introduces an innovative evolution of the traditional COSA model, one that is centered on lived-experience mentors/facilitators as the primary drivers of client engagement, accountability, and reintegration success. Participants will explore a modular, replicable model designed for counties, nonprofits, and CBOs seeking scalable, cost-effective reentry solutions. It integrates peer mentorship, structured case management, and data-informed program development. As communities seek more effective reintegration strategies, the next generation of COSA must be community-owned, scalable, and rooted in lived experience. This model bridges the gap between theory and implementation, equipping stakeholders with practical tools to reduce recidivism and improve public safety.

### Dismantling the registry state: constitutional litigation in action How strategic lawsuits across the nation are rewriting the constitutional boundaries of registry power

NARSOL Legal Committee Panel: Savannah Morgan, Mark Weinberg, and Guy Hamilton-Smith

Across the country, registry laws are being tested as never before. In this dynamic, fast-paced session, members of NARSOL's legal team—attorneys and paralegals actively litigating in state and federal courts—take you inside the constitutional battles reshaping the future of registry policy. From due-process violations to ex post facto punishment, from equal-protection failures to compelled-speech challenges, our team will walk through the cases that are redefining the limits of government power and exposing the structural flaws of the modern registry state.

Rather than a routine docket review, this session offers a behind-the-scenes look at the strategies, setbacks, breakthroughs, and human stories driving these lawsuits. Attendees will gain a clear understanding of where the constitutional landscape is shifting, what victories are emerging, and how coordinated litigation is laying the groundwork for meaningful registry reform nationwide.

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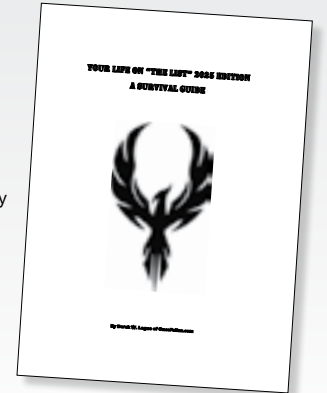
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# ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS

**Jeff (JB) Barton** is a paralegal and retired educator in California who spends his free time advocating for individuals forced to register and providing resources for employment and housing. He volunteers with advocacy groups nationwide, specifically as an education team member with Restorative Action Alliance and active advocate with ACSOL.

**Jeremy Burnworth** is founder and executive director of BreakIT, or Break Institutional Trauma, a trauma-informed entrepreneurial incubator supporting justice system-impacted and LGBTQ+ people. A former business owner and formerly incarcerated leader, he developed and taught an entrepreneurship curriculum while incarcerated that later inspired BreakIT. Jeremy now works at the intersection of economic mobility, reentry, and healing in order to help individuals facing significant barriers, including registry status, to build sustainable businesses and reclaim agency through entrepreneurship.

**Professor Catherine L. Carpenter** is the Arleigh M. Woods and William T. Woods chair and professor emerita at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles. She is also the past president of Alliance for Constitutional Sex Offense Laws (ACSOL) and current executive director of Access to Restorative Justice (ARJ), which strives for reintegration of the marginalized through education and legal advocacy. Professor Carpenter's scholarly focus centers on the injustice of sex offense registration laws. Her work has been cited by courts, law professors, and attorneys who advocate to overturn those laws. Her most recent article, entitled "Panicked Legislation," describes the moral pandemic that has gripped the public and which has produced runaway and ill-serving laws against those who commit sex offenses. This publication was recognized by the majority of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in *Commonwealth v. Torsileri*, and it was relied on by the dissent in its powerful rejoinder. An earlier piece entitled, "All Except For," criticizes the criminal justice reform movement for its systematic exclusion of those who have committed sex offenses from the sweeping benefits offered by the reforms. And as further evidence of the impact of Professor Carpenter's scholarship, Maryland overturned its registration laws in 2014 on ex post facto grounds, citing to Professor Carpenter's work in so doing.

**John Dawe** MNA, CNP, RCP, RCP-F, is NARSOL's marketing director. He joined the NARSOL team in 2024 after becoming managing director of PAROSOL, NARSOL's Pennsylvania affiliate group, where he continues in that capacity. He has more than twenty years of experience in professional public relations, marketing, advertising, and communications. He uses his personal experience as a person who is both a survivor and perpetrator of sexual harm to help others with similar life consequences live healthy and productive lives through recovery coaching. He is a professional writer; a trauma-informed, credentialed recovery coach/case manager; and a fan of treatment as prevention. He has a Master's in Nonprofit Administration with distinction from the North Park University School of Business and Nonprofit Administration, and he is a certified nonprofit professional with additional graduate certificates in leadership, governance, and fundraising.

**Peter (Pete) Dross** retired at the end of 2025 after a 32-year career with the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT), a nongovernmental organization that is the largest of its kind in the world. He served as vice president of external relations, providing leadership to CVT's policy advocacy, fundraising, and communications programs and has led successful issue and legislative advocacy campaigns on both state and federal levels that have enjoyed broad and bipartisan support. He now facilitates the government relations working group for the \$100 Million Committee, a volunteer group named for the annual cost of Minnesota's sex offense civil commitment program, the Minnesota Sex Offender Program (the actual cost is \$126 million in 2026). The \$100 Million Committee supports the central conclusion of a report issued 18 months ago by the Mitchell Hamline School of Law: MSOP is a failed program that has had no discernible impact on the incidence of sexual violence in Minnesota and should be carefully closed over a multi-year period with the funds reinvested in proven and promising approaches to preventing sexual violence.

**Brian Garrett** draws on more than 26 years as a registrant in Colorado in his role as an advocate with Advocates for Change Colorado (AFC), a NARSOL-affiliated organization focused on registry reform and evidence-based criminal legal policy. His work combines legal analysis, legislative engagement, and evidentiary record-building to challenge registry laws and designations at the state level. He has been active in recent Colorado legislative sessions and in strategic response to state-level registry rulings. Brian collaborates with Colorado state agencies, civil liberties organizations, and academic researchers on registry policy and reform.

**Kathie Gourlay** volunteered to tutor prisoners in math around 1990. Her advocacy for people and to change the laws continued from then until the present. She did not realize that her family would become personally involved until around 2005 when a family member was convicted of a sex offense crime. This caused Kathie to start attending support group meetings, and eventually she started her own. She has been facilitating the Michigan Citizens for Justice support and advocacy group for the last ten years.

**Guy Hamilton-Smith** is a member of the NARSOL Board of Directors. He is a civil rights and criminal defense attorney, advocate, and scholar whose work has been cited in federal appellate courts. His own experiences with the legal system inspired him to go to law school at the University of Kentucky. He spent several years thereafter working in state and federal criminal defense offices and launched a successful federal civil rights lawsuit challenging Kentucky laws related to people on the registry, leading to his role as the inaugural legal fellow for the Sex Offense Litigation and Policy Resource Center at the Mitchell Hamline School of Law. Guy is a member of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, the Law and Society Association's division on punishment and society, and JustLeadershipUSA's impact council. In addition to civil rights and criminal defense, his work focuses on post-conviction and appellate litigation. He has also authored several law review articles on sex offense registration, felony disenfranchisement, and carceral politics.

**Stephen Herto** is the chair and litigation analyst for the NARSOL Legal Committee. His experience in this area includes 15 Years of legal analysis, first as a legal clerk and paralegal centered on sexual offense and registration litigation. This included state and federal preparation of court filings for post-conviction proceedings in habeas corpus, coram nobis, and civil rights complaints, including certiorari petitions to the U.S. Supreme Court. His focus is parsing down litigation requests for viable claims NARSOL can pursue for successful impact litigation.

**Grant Hill** is a lobbyist, entrepreneur, and candidate for the Iowa House of Representatives. As the founder of the nonprofit 1 Love Legacy and host of the Legacy Unchained podcast, Grant has transformed his lived experience as a registered citizen into a platform for bold political action. Refusing to be silenced by a conviction, he actively lobbies for criminal justice reform and challenges stigma through media engagement. Grant teaches others how to transition from surviving the system to leading the conversation, proving that a past conviction does not disqualify you from helping shape the future.

**Bruce Hossfield** grew up in suburban New Jersey. He holds bachelor and graduate degrees in government and worked in local government service for over 35 years. Since retirement he has become increasingly concerned about being denied access to assisted living and nursing home care; he has decided to take matters into his own hands and create his own end of life care.

**Brenda Jones** is executive director of NARSOL. She has been involved in this cause since September of 2009. She started by looking for support but quickly saw the magnitude of the pain and despair faced by others affected by these draconian laws. When a high-profile murder in Maryland sent lawmakers scurrying to pass a multitude of tough-on-sex-offender laws, Brenda dove in headfirst and, as she says, "I have never looked back." Brenda has been executive director of state affiliate FAIR (Families Advocating Intelligent Registries) since its inception in 2010 and in 2012 became the first executive director of then-RSOL. Under her administration, NARSOL has seen many changes: increased transparency, launch of a membership program, and a more robust state affiliate initiative.

**Andrew Kiser** is an entrepreneur, author, and recovery leader dedicated to restoring dignity to the justice-impacted community. After overcoming years of personal and professional disruption from being labeled a registered offender, he transitioned into leadership roles with recovery programs and, for a time, served with one of the largest nonprofits that supports incarcerated individuals in the U.S. Andrew became certified in Mental Health First Aid, is currently authoring his first book on mental health, and is pursuing continued education to integrate therapeutic practices into his work. He empowers others to navigate their own "hero's journey" toward self-reliance, healing, and success.

**Richard Kramer**, PhD, is education director for B4U-ACT, a 501(c)(3) organization that promotes education and accurate information about minor-attracted people (MAPs), and accessible, humane mental health services for them. He organizes B4U-ACT's conferences and online educational meetings and speaks to classes of prospective therapists about MAPs and their mental health needs.

**Joseph F. Nehls** is not here as an expert above others but is here as one of you. He wears the same scarlet letter, walked through the same fire, and believed the same lies about who he was. Lepers, Lies, and Lineage is about what happens when shame gets inherited, when harm becomes normalized, and when silence passes for love. He doesn't speak from theory; he speaks from consequences, accountability, and recovery earned the hard way. His work is about tracing the roots—not to excuse behavior but to stop it. Healing doesn't erase responsibility. It strengthens it. We don't break the cycle by hiding. We break it by telling the truth and choosing differently.

**Danell Puglisi-Knutson** is founder and facilitator of SHINE-VOICES Women Forced to Register Support and Advocacy Group. She is housing provider for persons forced to register with the Florida Action Committee and Education, Advocacy, and Prevention Committee Co-Chair with the ACSOL Board of Directors.

**Theresa Robertson**, PhD, LCPC, LPC, is a licensed professional counselor in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Her expertise in therapeutic approaches include compassion focused therapy (CFT), internal family systems (IFS), dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), and psychedelic-assisted therapy (PAT). She has provided individual therapy services to MAPs (minor attracted persons) during the past seven years.

**Jacob Stone** is an advocate and researcher with direct experience using the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act to obtain federal records related to incarceration, sentencing, and public safety policy. He has filed multiple federal requests, navigated appeals and mediation, litigated FOIA cases both pro se and with counsel, and successfully recovered attorney fees. His work emphasizes ethical, aggregate use of data and realistic transparency strategies. Jacob brings a first-person, practitioner perspective focused on how these tools actually work in practice for impacted individuals and advocates.

**Kristie Torbick** is a mother of three, cancer survivor, and directly impacted advocate whose work centers on disenfranchised grief and restorative healing. She is a trauma-informed life coach specializing in grief, a trained facilitator of restorative healing circles, and a development specialist at Therapeutic Works. As co-founder of the 10,000 Mothers Initiative and a trauma-informed yoga instructor and guest presenter with the Prison Yoga Project, Kristie brings healing practices into marginalized and justice-impacted communities. Kristie holds a Master's degree and integrates lived experience with clinical and community-based approaches to create spaces where unacknowledged grief can be named, witnessed, and transformed.

**Andrea Travers**, D. Min., is project director/founder of COSA San Diego (Circles of Support and Accountability), a community-based restorative justice organization supporting 290 registrants reintegrating after years of incarceration. She founded COSA in 2020 in collaboration with the public defender's office for those designated as sexually violent persons (SVP) and facilitates COSA circles at Coalinga State Hospital. Dr. Travers co-authored a restorative justice reentry program for San Diego County jails and brings 30 years of experience in addiction recovery, rehabilitation, and reentry. An ordained interfaith minister, her doctoral work translating Alcoholics Anonymous principles into eight faith traditions is used in more than 75 countries ([www.12wisdomsteps.com](http://www.12wisdomsteps.com)).

**Jason Wasserman** is currently president of Restorative Action Alliance and co-host of Amplified Voices Podcast. He works as an employment case manager for justice impacted individuals in Connecticut.

**Mark Weinberg** is a 1984 graduate of Yale College and a 1988 graduate of the law school at the University of Chicago. Since 2014, his main professional focus has been litigating the constitutionality of laws and policies directed at people convicted of sexual offenses. During that time, he has successfully litigated constitutional challenges to residency restrictions applied to persons with sexual offense convictions in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. He has also successfully challenged the constitutionality of various parole restrictions imposed on individuals convicted of sexual offenses, including the Illinois Department of Corrections' no-contact policy with one's own minor children. He has also brought three class actions lawsuits that in combination have undone the Illinois Department of Corrections' policy of holding individuals convicted of sexual offenses in prison past their outdates due to their inability to find compliant housing.



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# SUPPORTING OUR WORK

As we look toward the future, we continue to build on the significant momentum our movement has made toward rational, evidence-based prevention and sexual offense legal policy modernization across the United States. **This can only happen by leveraging the time, talent, and treasure of our volunteers, donors, and advocates.**

In addition to one-time contributions, Vivante Espero, NARSOL's foundation, has established the following programs individuals can utilize to support our work financially.

## Sustaining Support

Giving a fixed amount every month allows us to anticipate cash flows and budget appropriately when extending our reach, programs, and services. In an age where most families pay for, on average, seven subscription services per month, please consider making NARSOL one of your budgeted monthly expenses.

## Challenge Giving

NARSOL has the ability to set up individual contribution pages where individuals can put together a team of donors to support our efforts. Some organizers pledge to match all the funds raised on their giving page. Hosting a virtual giving event for NARSOL can be easy and fun, especially if done around a birthday, anniversary, or "freedom" date.

## Matching Gifts

As a 501(c)3 public charity, NARSOL's foundation is often eligible to receive matching gifts from our donors' employers' matching gifts programs. Our volunteers and conference attendees may also be eligible for paid time off or volunteer time through corporate volunteer programs. Contact NARSOL for information.

## Planned Giving

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