

Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Restorative Justice Summit, December 2nd & 3rd

Speaker Biographies



Regan Byrd: Regan Byrd is an award-winning anti-oppression activist, speaker, and trainer who has trained dozens of organizations on anti-oppression and allyship, including the Colorado Mid-Wives Association, the Sierra Club, the Colorado Democratic Party, YWCA of Boulder County, and Denver Public Schools. Regan has served as the morning keynote speaker for the DU Women’s Conference in 2017, the afternoon keynote for the 2018 League of Women Voters annual conference, and morning MC for the Womxn’s March Denver 2019 march. She was

also a trainer at the 2018 White Privilege Symposium in Denver. She has participated in various expert panels on topics ranging from critical race theory, to the history of police, to housing justice. Regan is also a seasoned nonprofit professional with over 13 years of experience in grassroots and social justice non-profit organizations, formerly working for the Arc of Jefferson County, 9to5 Colorado: National Association of Working Women, Hunger Free Colorado, and the Bell Policy Center. She previously served as office manager for the Colorado Nonprofit Development Center, and the Data and Systems Manager for the Bell Policy Center. Regan currently serves as treasurer of the board for the Colorado People’s Alliance and was formerly the co-chair of the board for 9to5 Colorado for 10 years, and a legacy board member with Womxn’s March Denver. Regan is a former commissioner on the Aurora Humans Rights Commission, and former board member for the youth mentorship non-profit “YESS Institute”. She is a graduate of the Transit Alliance’s Citizen Academy and Emerge Colorado, a training program for women running for office. She is a recent graduate of the Denver Metro Chamber’s “Impact Denver” leadership class of Spring 2018 and is a recent participant in the Chinook Fund’s 2020 Spring Giving Project.

Regan has a deep commitment to social justice, institutional systems change, and collective liberation. She believes this is best done through self-reflexivity, strong allyship, knowledge cultivation, intentional inclusivity, coalition building, and dismantling systems of oppression. Regan Byrd is an alumni of the University of Denver’s undergraduate program, with dual B.A. degrees in Public Policy and Sociology, and minors in Gender and Women’s Studies, and English. Regan has been named a “Woman to Watch” by the Denver League of Women Voters, is the winner of the 2015 Lilly Ledbetter award from 9to5 Colorado, and was named 2019’s “Woman of the Year” by the Business and Professional Women of Denver. In her free time, she enjoys making fun of bad movies, exploring the Denver dining scene, competitive video gaming, and fawning over new technology.

Panel, December 2nd 9:00-10:30
Workshop, December 3rd 10:30-12:00

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Danielle Fagan: Danielle Fagan is the Victim Assistant Coordinator for the Boulder County Probation department and sits on the Colorado State Restorative Justice Council. She has been serving victims as an advocate for almost 20 years and is passionately committed to integrating victim centered restorative justice practices into her work. She began her career in victim services in 1998 at the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office working with victims during the Columbine shooting. Following that, she worked as a Victim Witness Specialist for the Jefferson County District's Attorney. Currently, she facilitates restorative justice

processes, high risk victim offender dialogues and provides support and services to victims whose offenders are on probation. Danielle earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Colorado in Boulder and her master's degree in criminal justice at the University of Colorado in Denver. When she isn't at work, Danielle enjoys spending time with her two children, her Golden Retriever and being outside.

Panel, December 2nd 9:00-10:30

Workshop, December 2nd 1:15-2:45



Lynn Lee has been working in Restorative Justice for the past 20 years as a community volunteer, victim advocate, facilitator, trainer and director. She is a retired special education teacher and holds a masters degree in education administration. Lynn was the chair of the Pikes Peak Restorative Justice Council beginning with its inception in 2007 through 2015. She continues to be an active board member. Lynn is the coordinator for the Manitou Springs Restorative Justice Project, working closely with the court and police department. She has

successfully facilitated over 500 restorative justice conferences and has worked with the courts, schools, Colorado Dept. of Corrections and Colorado Youth Corrections in implementing and facilitating restorative justice and restorative practices. She is a recipient of the 2013 Pikes Peak Restorative Justice Leadership Award and the Peace Alliance 2015 Restorative Justice Peacebuilding Award. Lynn facilitated the first high risk victim offender dialogue in the Colorado Dept. of Corrections and continues to successfully facilitate high-risk victim offender dialogues in the Colorado prison. Lynn was appointed to the Colorado State Restorative Justice Council in 2013 and continues on the board, assisting in implementing RJ legislation around the state of Colorado. Lynn recently acted as co-chair for the 7th National Restorative Justice Conference held in Denver, Colorado in June, 2019.

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Strong Oak Lefebvre, MSSA: Executive Director and co-founder of the Visioning B.E.A.R. Circle Intertribal Coalition INC. She is a co-author of the Walking in Balance with All Our Relations teaching curriculum, a violence prevention approach that is based on transformative/restorative Circle practices and traditional values of indigenous people prior to colonization. Strong Oak has recently been named to the statutory Governor's Restorative Justice Advisory Committee in Massachusetts to serve from 2018 to 2024. She teaches Circle process to communities, agencies, and providers working with those who are survivors of homicide victims, domestic and sexual violence; and those who are working to return to their communities' violence-free after having hurt others.

Panel, December 2nd 9:00-10:30

Workshop, December 3rd 8:45-10:15



Shana McClain: Shana McClain has a BS in Sociology, a BS in Psychology, and a MSW from Western Carolina University. Since obtaining her MSW, McClain worked as a researcher at the Institute on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault at the University of Texas at Austin. She co-managed a longitudinal mixed-methods project, Cultivating Learning and Safe Environments (CLASE), which explored prevalence and perceptions of intimate partner violence and sexual violence across 13 UT System institutions. Prior to her position at UT, McClain worked in direct practice in both higher education and community settings. She provided counseling services to undergraduate and graduate students, as well as crisis intervention and case management to survivors of intimate partner violence and sexual assault in a community shelter. McClain has also worked in community organizing across the South to promote full LGBT equality and support grassroots organizers in serving their local communities. As a student-conduct trained restorative justice facilitator, she collaborated with human resources, campus law enforcement, dean of students and leading restorative justice experts to incorporate restorative circles and conferences at the university-level. McClain has also provided consultation services to other university consortiums on campus climate survey design and data presentation.

Panel, December 2nd 9:00-10:30

Nicole Nahm is a victim advocate at the 18th Judicial District Attorney's Office Adult and Juvenile Diversion Counseling Program. She started her career in the DA's Fast Track Program as a COVA intern, working on domestic violence cases in 2011. She went on to work in county and district court before landing her feet in the Diversion Program. Her current role is the victim representative on juvenile offense specific cases. Nicole holds her bachelor's degree in Human Services from Metropolitan State University.

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Liz Porter-Merrill: Liz Porter-Merrill grew up in a rural town on Colorado's Western Slope, graduated as a double Buff from the University of Colorado undergrad and Colorado Law, and clerked for two Colorado state judges. After ten years advocating for her incarcerated clients in the appellate courts, Liz transitioned into a position focusing on restorative justice at the Colorado State Public Defender's Office. She supports public defenders, prosecutors, and judges navigate restorative justice law. Liz also serves as the public defender representative on the Colorado Restorative Justice Council, an organization that guides statewide restorative justice policy decisions.

Outside of work, Liz aspires to cultivate a paradigm grounded in support, healing, and transformation for all. She regularly facilitates high-impact dialogues (HI-VOD), community group conferences, as well as circles for community-building, for racial justice learning, and to support people impacted by the criminal legal system – both harmed people and people responsible for harm. In her view, restorative and transformative justice offer a way forward to reckon with violence (interpersonal & structural) and oppression (racial, patriarchal, & beyond). Every day, Liz also seeks to grow restorative practices and accountability in her personal life and while parenting a 5-year-old rebel daughter.

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sonya shah initiated The Ahimsa Collective in 2016. She is also an associate professor at the California Institute of Integral Studies. Central to her core values are nurturing community belonging and collective care, healing, compassion, love and transforming harm. She is a Buddhist, a first-generation immigrant from the Northwestern part of India and feels most at home in nature. She has two amazing children who remind her what it means to be in love all of the time, and currently resides in northern California.

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Deb Witzel, M.A., currently serves the 20th JD Probation Department in Colorado as the Restorative Justice Director and Probation Supervisor for the Victim's Unit and Domestic Violence. In 2013, she became the first Colorado Coordinator for Restorative Justice in the State Court Administrator's Office. Prior to that, in 2008 Deb began serving the Colorado Coordinating Council on Restorative Justice as their manager. She was Executive Director of the Longmont Community Justice Partnership (LCJP) from 2008 – 2013 where she supervised an amazing team and worked in partnership with law enforcement, schools and the justice system to support the use of restorative practices in service to people who have experienced harm as well as the people who caused them harm. Deb has been a

restorative justice practitioner, trainer and consultant since 2004, facilitating hundreds of successful restorative processes and trainings in the justice system, schools and communities. Her passion is inspiring others to become restorative practitioners and supporters.

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Workshop, December 2nd 1:15-2:45