

## 2021 KANSAS SENTENCING COMMISSION WORKSHOP PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

### **Allysa Gambarella**

Ms. Gambarella began her career as an Assistant Prosecutor in 2004, after completing a judicial clerkship with the Honorable Bradley Ferencz, P.J.Cr. (Ret.) and the Honorable Deborah Venezia, P.J.F.P. in 2003. She graduated from the University of Delaware in 2000 and was awarded her *Juris Doctor* degree in 2003 from Seton Hall University School of Law.

Ms. Gambarella started as a prosecutor with the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office in Jersey City, New Jersey in 2004. She was assigned to the appellate unit, juvenile unit and trial teams. In 2009, Ms. Gambarella joined the Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office in New Brunswick, New Jersey where she gained trial experience in juvenile cases, general trial team cases, sex crimes cases, child abuse cases, vehicular homicide cases and homicide cases. In 2013 Ms. Gambarella became a supervising Assistant Prosecutor and in December of 2016, Ms. Gambarella became the Section Chief of the Special Victims Unit where she served until December of 2019.

In February of 2020, Ms. Gambarella joined the office of the Second Judicial District Attorney in Albuquerque, New Mexico as a Deputy District Attorney. There, Ms. Gambarella was assigned to the major crimes unit and was tasked with prosecuting serious violent offenses, homicides, sex crimes and child abuse cases. During her time with the Office of the Second Judicial District Attorney, Ms. Gambarella also assisted with creating and implementing a *Brady/Giglio* policy within the office.

Throughout her career as a prosecutor, Ms. Gambarella oversaw investigations into and handled the prosecution of high-profile cases, including the prosecution of priests, police officers, doctors, and other public officials. She was selected to participate in state-wide working groups and task forces on various issues relating to sex crimes, internet crimes against children, and Megan's law. Ms. Gambarella has lectured and trained multiple disciplines on relevant topics over her career.

In May of 2021, Ms. Gambarella joined the National District Attorneys Association as Program Director. In her role as Program Director, Ms. Gambarella continues to provide support to prosecutors and law enforcement by managing the development and implementation of training courses for the association. Ms. Gambarella works to identify relevant topics and works closely with subject matter experts in delivering training content. Ms. Gambarella also provides technical assistance in areas such as general trial advocacy, expert witnesses, and trial strategy.

### **Frank Russo**

Frank Russo is the Director of Government and Legislative Affairs at the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA). With more than 5,500 members nationwide NDAA is recognized as the leading source of national expertise on the prosecution function and is a valuable resource for the media, academia, government, and community leaders. Through continued advocacy, engagement with criminal justice stakeholders, and solicitation of ideas and input from its members, the association is able to provide the prosecutor perspective on issues including human trafficking, drug policy, forensic science, domestic violence, electronic evidence, asset forfeiture, child abuse, juvenile justice, and many more.

Prior to joining NDAA, Frank worked on Capitol Hill as a Law Clerk with both the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary and the U.S. House Judiciary Committee on the Subcommittee for Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security. He is a graduate of The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law, in Washington, D.C. where he currently serves on the school's Alumni Council, and received his bachelor's degree from the University of Georgia. He holds a license to practice law in the State of Georgia.

## **Scott Brunner**

Scott Brunner is the Deputy Secretary of Hospitals and Facilities with the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services (KDADS.) This new position provides executive oversight of the 4 state hospitals and the KDADS staff conducting surveys and certification reviews for long term care facilities and health occupations. Before starting at KDADS in January 2020, Scott was the Vice President for Stakeholder Relations for Aetna Better Health of Kansas, the new Medicaid health plan operating in the KanCare program. Before working for Aetna, Scott worked in a variety of roles in the Kansas Medicaid Program including State Medicaid Director, Chief Financial Officer, and Director of Informatics from 2004 through 2011. After leaving state service, Scott was the Coverage and Access Team Leader for the Kansas Health Institute, a state focused health policy think tank, during the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and Kansas' movement to full Medicaid managed care. Scott lives in Topeka, Kansas.

## **Chianna Hemken**

Chianna Hemken is the Administrative Program Director of the State Security Program (SSP) at Larned State Hospital. She has been employed at LSH for over 17 years. Prior to her role as the APD, Chianna was the Director of Social Services for the hospital. Outside of the hospital, Chianna serves as the Director of Camp Hope, a summer camp for children who have or have had cancer.

## **Lesia Dipman**

Lesia Dipman is the Superintendent of the Larned State Hospital. She has a master's degree in social work, she has worked for the State of Kansas for the last 37 years. She has served in a variety of positions at LSH including patient ombudsman, Social Services Director, Program Director for the State Security Program and for the last two years Superintendent.

## **Francis Givens**

Francis Givens is originally from Mission, Kansas. Francis graduated from Shawnee Mission North High School in 2007. She then went on to begin college at Johnson County Community College and completed her bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice at the University of Wyoming in 2011, where she competed in track and field and cross-country. After graduation, Francis went on to graduate law school at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law in 2014. Since graduation, Francis has spent time as an Assistant District Attorney in Wyandotte County, Staff Attorney for the Kansas Sentencing Commission and a City Prosecutor in Kansas City, Kansas. Francis is the Special Projects Director for the Kansas Sentencing Commission.

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## **Kira Johnson**

Kira Johnson has been the SB 123 Program Director for over four years. In her position, she develops and reviews program policy, procedure, and expenditures, while working with the treatment providers and other stakeholders to ensure offenders are receiving appropriate treatment. Kira has worked as a behavioral health professional at numerous correctional facilities and in community mental health. Her professional interests include anxiety treatment, integrated behavioral health, and correctional psychology. Kira possesses two master's degrees in Clinical Psychology and is a Licensed Masters Level Psychologist in the state of Kansas. Currently, Kira is a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at the Florida Institute of Technology.