



# Improving the Court and Community Response to Persons with Mental Illness and Co-Occurring Disorders Through Compassion and Hope



A Series of Five Online Learning and Planning Sessions



Office of Lt. Governor  
**Juliana Stratton**



SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS  
JUDICIAL COLLEGE

## Learning Session 4

Tuesday, October 20, 2020  
3:00-5:00 pm

### How Mental Illness and Trauma Affect Quality of Life

**Welcome** Senator Sara Feigenholtz, Illinois 6<sup>th</sup> District

**Welcome** Heidi Mueller, Director, Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice

**Speaker** Patrick Kennedy, Former United States Representative, The Kennedy Forum Founder, One Mind Campaign Co-Founder

*This year the world was confronted with a deadly and disruptive global pandemic. As the number of cases of COVID-19 increase, so do reports of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation among our communities. The mental health effects of COVID-19 and racial inequity compound an already ever-present reality – not everyone has equal access to mental health care. As a world leader, our country needs to prioritize policy measures to address this. Congressman Kennedy will discuss how federal legislative and policy initiatives continue to evolve in ways that impact the delivery of mental health treatment in an equitable way.*



During his time in Congress, Patrick J. Kennedy was the lead author of the groundbreaking Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (Federal Parity Law), which requires insurers to cover treatment





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for mental health and substance use disorders no more restrictively than treatment for illnesses of the body, such as diabetes and cancer. In 2013, he founded The Kennedy Forum, a nonprofit that unites advocates, business leaders, and government agencies to advance evidence-based practices, policies, and programming in mental health and addiction. In 2015, Kennedy co-authored the New York Times Bestseller, “A Common Struggle: A Personal Journey Through the Past and Future of Mental Illness and Addiction,” which details a bold plan for the future of mental health care in America. In 2017, he was appointed to the President’s Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis.

Kennedy is also the founder of DontDenyMe.org, an educational campaign that empowers consumers and providers to understand parity rights and connects them to essential appeals guidance and resources; co-founder of One Mind, an organization that pushes for greater global investment in brain research; co-chair of Mental Health for US, a nonpartisan initiative designed to elevate mental health and addiction in policy conversations during the 2020 election cycle; and co-chair of the Action Alliance’s Mental Health & Suicide Prevention National Response to COVID-19.

## Speaker

Dr. Sarah Vinson, Georgia Psychiatrist, Board Certified in Child and Adolescent, Adult, and Forensic Psychiatry

*Dr. Vinson will address structural trauma, interpersonal trauma based on environment, social justice and mental health.*



Dr. Sarah Y. Vinson is a triple board certified physician who specializes in adult, child & adolescent, and forensic psychiatry. In addition to maintaining an active clinic practice where she sees a socioeconomically diverse clientele, she is the founder of [Lorio Forensics](#), a multidisciplinary culturally and structurally informed forensic mental health consultation company. She has consulted on cases in





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over a dozen states and testified and been admitted as an expert in state, federal, criminal and family courts. Dr. Vinson graduated Summa Cum Laude from Florida A & M University. After graduating from medical school at the University of Florida with Research Honors and as an Inductee in the Chapman Humanism Honors Society, she completed her general psychiatry training at Cambridge Health Alliance/Harvard Medical School. While there, she also received specialized training in trauma through the Victims of Violence Program. She then returned to the South to complete fellowships in both child & adolescent and forensic psychiatry at Emory University School of Medicine, where she continues to serve as adjunct faculty.

Dr. Vinson is an Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Morehouse School of Medicine, where she was the lead architect and is the Program Director for the Child Psychiatry Fellowship, the first and only at an HBCU medical school. She has been elected and/or appointed to national and statewide office by her professional peers and is on the board of both the American Association of Community Psychiatry and the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law. She is also one of two National Psychiatric Advisors for the [Judges and Psychiatrists Leadership Initiative](#), a collaboration between the Council of State Governments and the American Psychiatric Association that designs and delivers trainings for Judges regarding mental health and criminal justice. Additionally, at the invitation of the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA), she serves on the National Judicial Task Force to Examine State Courts' Response to Mental Illness. She is the co-editor of two texts, Social (In)Justice and Mental Health and Pediatric Mental Health for Primary Care Providers.

**Moderator** Michelle O'Brien, Principal Court Management Consultant, National Center for State Courts

**Questions**

