Faculty Bios, Regional Training 2015

Vulnerable Adult Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

Linda M. English, MSW, Program Coordinator 1/APS TA Consultant

Ms. Linda M. English is a Program Consultant in the Division of Adult Protective Services and Domestic Violence with the South Carolina Department of Social Services. She has been employed at the Sumter County DSS office for 16 years in Adult Protective Services. She received her Associate Degree from the University of South Carolina and later received her Bachelor's Degree from Morris College in Sumter, South Carolina. She received her Masters of Social Work Degree from the University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina.

Ms. English currently resides in Sumter, South Carolina. She has two adult daughters, Samaria and Danielle. She has two granddaughters, Ayana and Bre'ana. Her heart goes out to the vulnerable adult population and she believes that everyone should do their best to make a difference in the lives of everyone they meet and "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Ms. English can be contacted at (803) 898-8166 or email address: linda.english@dss.sc.gov.

Randolph (Randy) Thomas

Mr. Randy Thomas is a retired police officer having served for over 25 years in the law enforcement profession (Tampa Police Department, Richland County (SC) Sheriff's Office and South Carolina Department of Public Safety). His experience encompasses patrol, investigations, planning and research and over 14 years as a law enforcement trainer and supervisor with the South Carolina Department of Public Safety, Criminal Justice Training Division (Unit Chief, Behavioral Science/ Investigations).

He has developed and presented training relating to the investigation of child and elder abuse and juvenile crime. He is certified in Problem Based Learning by the US Department of Justice (COP). Mr. Thomas was the Project Director for South Carolina's law enforcement domestic violence training program. He was a member of the South Carolina Adult Protection Coordinating Council and has served on a number of committees in the area of Elder Abuse. He has been the President, National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and currently serves in an advisory capacity to the United States Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, The American Bar Association and the National Center on State Courts in the area of elder abuse. He has presented testimony to the United States Senate supporting the elder justice act. He is also a member of the Board of Directors, Dickerson Center for Children; the local child advocacy center. He has been an adjunct professor at the University of South Carolina, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice in the area of juvenile delinquency, crime prevention and child abuse.

Mr. Thomas currently presents training to law enforcement, social service personnel and other professionals in the area of elder abuse issues and investigations throughout the United States. He

provides consulting services to law enforcement and others in the investigation of elder abuse cases. He has served as a consultant to Stetson University College of Law, Elder Consumer Protection project. He is the co-author of *Elder Abuse Detection and Intervention: A Collaborative Approach.* He also served over 38 years (active and reserve) in the military as an intelligence officer retiring as a Colonel (Army). He received his undergraduate degree in Political Science from Chaminade University (Honolulu, 1971) and his Master's degree in Political Science (Public Administration) from the University of South Florida (Tampa, 1974).

Dennis Gmerek

Mr. Dennis M. Gmerek received a BA from the College of Charleston in 1982. He received a JD from the University of South Carolina – School of Law in 1985. He was in private practice until 1998, when he became a staff attorney for the Aiken County Department of Social Services. In 2005, he became the circuit coordinator for legal services for the Second Judicial Circuit for the Department of Social Services. He is a former president of the South Carolina Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. Mr. Gmerek was involved with Governor Sanford's Task Force for Children in Foster Care and Adoption Services. Mr. Gmerek has been active with the Cumbee Center to Assist Abused Person, Inc. in the Aiken, South Carolina, serving both on the board of directors and as a domestic violence volunteer. Mr. Gmerek is currently a member of the Best Legal Practice sub-committee of the Family Court Bench-Bar Committee. In September, 2011, Mr. Gmerek accepted a position in the Office of General Counsel's Office for the Department of Social Services. He currently manages the Legal Case Management System (LCMS) for the agency and is a practice resource for the DSS county attorneys.

Celeste Moore

Ms. Celeste Moore is an Assistant General Counsel with Office of General Counsel for the South Carolina Department of Social Services. She received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science/Pre Law from South Carolina State University and a Juris Doctorate from the University of South Carolina School of Law. Ms. Moore began her legal career with the Horry County Public Defender's Office, in Conway, South Carolina, where she served as Assistant Public Defender and later Deputy Public Defender. She was also an Assistant Solicitor with the Horry County Solicitor's Office prior to her employment with the Department of Social Services.