



**OFFICE OF THE ULSTER COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY**  
**Emmanuel C. Nneji, District Attorney**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ULSTER COUNTY OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY HOSTS  
SHOWCASE ON INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE INTERVENTION TASK  
FORCE, HIGHLIGHTS PARTNERSHIP WITH SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

Kingston, NY — On August 6, 2024, the Office of the Ulster County District Attorney (“UCDA”) showcased its Intimate Partner Violence Intervention (“IPVI”) Task Force and announced its expansion into the Ulster County Sheriff’s Office (“UCSO”) as of July 1, 2024, at an event held at the Ulster County Restorative Justice Center. Outgoing **Director of Projects, Kassondra Seyfert**, was honored for her years of service to Ulster County and dedication to the implementation of the IPVI Task Force. Seyfert will be moving on to a role at the Division of Criminal Justice Services (“DCJS”) and utilize IPVI’s successes in Ulster County in her new role to bring them to other parts of New York State as part of Governor Kathy Hochul’s targeted investments in communities for prevention of domestic violence using evidence-driven, offender-focused, and trauma-informed interventions.

The IPVI Task Force first began as a pilot project with the City of Kingston Police Department (“KPD”) when DCJS approached the UCDA and KPD. Following the launch of IPVI in Kingston, New Paltz Police Department (“NPPD”) and Saugerties Police Department (“SPD”) joined. In 2020, the UCDA was the recipient of \$500,000 in federal funds from the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women in support of IPVI. Throughout 2023, Town of Ulster Police Department and UCSO participated in comprehensive IPVI training led by Seyfert, with assistance from Ulster County Probation, and Crime Victims Assistance Program (“CVAP”). Ulster County Probation Supervisor, **Deborah Stitt**, has also been instrumental to the Task Force’s success.

The IPVI Task Force meets regularly and communicates nearly daily, convening representatives from KPD, SPD, NPP, Ulster County Probation Department, CVAP, New York State Department of Community Corrections, Family of Woodstock, and regional services providers and local community members to discuss specific classified intimate partner violence offenders in participating jurisdictions. Those meetings now also include offenders County-wide with the expansion into the Sheriff’s Office.



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IPVI intervenes early on with intimate partner violence offenders known to the criminal justice system. Developed by the National Network for Safe Communities ("NNSC") at John Jay College, also a stakeholder in the Task Force, the IPVI protocol aims to prevent further incidents of intimate partner violence by clearly communicating the risks offenders can face if they choose to reoffend. The initiative offers supportive services to offenders and, when necessary, addresses the most dangerous individuals through enforcement actions. IPVI also simultaneously includes parallel notification to victims of abuse with immediate connection to victims' advocates through CVAP.

The program included remarks from leaders expressing their continued commitment to the IPVI Task Force. **Lieutenant Ricky Negron of KPD** commended the Task Force and recounted the inception of the IPVI within the City of Kingston. **Director of IPVI Task Force Luba Reznikova** and **Special Victims Bureau Chief Jenna Hastings**, both of the District Attorney's Office, commended Seyfert for her dedication, highlighting her loyalty to the IPVI program as an instrumental support to the County's small Special Victims Bureau, which currently handles 300 cases of domestic violence largely split among only three prosecutors. They also welcomed **Sarah Kramer-Harrison**, incoming Director of Projects, who has served our County as a victim's advocate and educator with Ulster County CVAP and is a clear choice for the position with Seyfert's departure.

**Legislator and Chair of the Ulster County Law Enforcement Committee Gina Hansut** is an advocate for curbing the incidence of intimate partner violence in our communities, offering, "Today many entities in Ulster County came together to bring awareness to the IPVI Task Force. As the first County in New York State to implement this program in 2015, it has truly made a difference in so many lives. Allowing the victim to not have the burden but instead focusing on holding the abuser accountable for their actions, changes the dynamic. The goal is to end the cycle of violence, and this program provides assistance to help meet that goal, as well as much support to the victim, building relationships and trust after a traumatic situation. Today we also celebrate Kassondra Seyfert and her dedication and commitment to this program. We are grateful for all she has done, in paving the way and putting down a foundation for helping those in a vulnerable situation. Kassondra gave them hope. Ulster County thanks her and we know she will continue to do great work in her new role and wish her nothing but the best."



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**Peter Criswell, Chair of the Ulster County Legislature**, said, "The Ulster County Legislature is committed to the IPVI Task Force and its vital work in our community. The recent expansion of the IPVI program, now including the Ulster County Sheriff's Office, enhances our coordinated response to intimate partner violence. We are grateful for Kassondra Seyfert's leadership and wish her success in her new role at the Division of Criminal Justice Services. This expansion marks a significant milestone in our mission to protect residents and deter violence."

**Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger**, whose Office oversees the Probation Department, Crime Victims Assistance Program, as well as the Public Defender's Office, said, "Intimate partner violence is the most insidious and pervasive form of violent crime in our communities, perpetrated primarily against women, and requires a high level of collaboration by law enforcement, government, and community partners to stem the tide. This is where the County's Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Task Force comes in, combining the resources, information, and reach of the District Attorney, Probation Department, law enforcement, County service providers, Family of Woodstock, and other partners to intervene and drive down the incidence of violence. I cannot overstate the importance of this work in breaking the cycle of violence and building healthier, safer communities."

**Sheriff Juan Figueroa**, whose staff have received training on the IPVI program over the past year and have now implemented the protocol, said, "The intimate partner violence intervention program is an outside the box approach to deter violence in a domestic relationship. Victims want the behavior of their loved one to change. This strategy offers communication in behavioral change, and nationwide this has reduced violence."

**District Attorney Emmanuel C. Nneji**, whose career has included prosecution of some of the most horrific incidents of intimate partner violence in Ulster County said, "This is a bittersweet day for us at the UCDA-Kassondra Seyfert's contributions and commitment have seen us through a period of great change in the law and in our office, as well as service over the terms of three District Attorneys. Her tenacious commitment to innovative approaches to an insidious problem is something to be admired and what we all should aspire to as public servants."



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Finally, **Chief Assistant District Attorney Elizabeth Culmone-Mills**, who founded the intervention together with Cliff Tremper, retired Kingston Police Department Lieutenant, and oversaw its initial founding and implementation in 2018 with Seyfert, presented her with a commemorative plaque from the UCDA, stating, "For years, we had focused on the victims, urging them to leave abusive relationships, when we realized we needed to shift our focus. Our new strategy centered on the offenders and working to stop abusers while prioritizing victim safety. We recognized that different situations require tailored responses, but the key was a coordinated effort. I am proud of Ulster County's status as not only the first county in New York to implement this program and the only one to sustain it. This success stems from Ulster's unique character: we have dedicated professionals who understand that the cause is greater than any individual. They are committed to making a difference, together."

**If you or a loved one are experiencing sexual or domestic violence, please call Ulster County Crime Victims Assistance Program at (845) 340-3443, or 911 if you are in immediate danger.**

***Special thanks to 2024 Summer Intern Morgan Dunn for her contribution to this press release.***

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