



The Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force is the voice of the community on issues related to the quality and responsiveness of mental health and substance use disorder services.

The Intersection Between Mental Health and Human Trafficking **June 14, 2022**

Speaker Bios



Malia Chow, HIR Wellness Institute, Community Healer and Advocate

Malia is a Native Hawaiian woman, artist, musician, dancer, teacher, environmental advocate, and mother, and one who believes that participation in cultural and artistic practices is an essential part of healing, especially for Indigenous people. She believes in rediscovering and honoring our connection to each other, and the 'āina [land] keeps us grounded and helps to promote balance—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Her passions include teaching others how to integrate indigenous wisdom and principles into their daily lives, especially regarding environmental and cultural practices. As an advocate and survivor of violence, she supports survivors who have been impacted by sexual assault, domestic, intimate partner violence, human trafficking, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous People [MMIP].



Melinda Hughes M.Ed., MBA, LPC, SAC , The Benedict Center, Inc. Director of Programs and Operations

Melinda assumed the role of the Benedict Center's first Director of Programs and Operations in September of 2022, overseeing the day to day administration of all Benedict Center programs and operations. She joined the Benedict Center June 2019 as Director of the Sisters Program, and guided the program through the covid pandemic, overseen renovations to the Sisters South location, and coordinated the Sisters North move to Wellness Commons. Hughes brings 25 years of experience as a Mental Health and Substance Abuse Counselor, with a career focus in designing programming that facilitates healing and recovery from underlying interpersonal trauma(s). She also developed and teaches the Trauma certificate courses for the Master's in Community Psychology program at Alverno College. Hughes developed Aurora's Bread of Healing program.



Pam Malin, Disability Rights Wisconsin, Victim Advocacy Program, VOCA Advocacy Specialist, VAWA Coordinator .

Pam Malin has worked at the intersection of disability and abuse for over 35 years. She is currently working at Disability Rights Wisconsin in the Victim Advocacy Program. Pam works collaboratively with Multi-Disciplinary Teams, including prosecutors, victim witness, investigators, forensic interviewers, and community advocates, to advocate for and understand the unique needs of victims of crime with disabilities. She is also the Violence Against Women (VAWA) Healthy and Safe Relationships Project Coordinator.



Dana World-Patterson, Human Trafficking Task Force of Greater Milwaukee, Chairperson; Foundations for Freedom, Inc. Founder and Executive Director

Dana World-Patterson has devoted over thirty years to teaching etiquette & image and has served thousands of individuals through her love to see people be better. The past fourteen years has been a deep dive in eradicating human trafficking. Amidst growing awareness of human sex trafficking, Dana joined forces as a founding member of the County Human Trafficking Task Force and when it sunset, she then transitioned as Chairperson of the Human

Trafficking Task Force of Greater Milwaukee, an affiliate of the City of Milwaukee Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. She also established Foundations for Freedom, Inc., a 501c3, not-for-profit entity, existing to strengthen women and girls, reduce their vulnerabilities and eradicate human trafficking through education, awareness, advocacy, and prevention. [Full bio on Foundations For Freedom.](#)



Erika J. Petty, Lotus Legal Clinic, Executive Director and Lead Attorney

Erika Petty is Executive Director and Lead Attorney at LOTUS Legal Clinic, where she has worked with survivors of sexual violence and human trafficking since 2016. Erika supervises staff attorneys and handles her own caseload of providing civil and immigration legal services to survivors. Erika is a frequent presenter and speaker on victims' rights generally, and specifically, on meeting the needs of human trafficking survivors through a rights-based and victim centered lens. Prior to joining LOTUS Legal Clinic, Erika worked as a

staff attorney at Legal Action of Wisconsin, providing civil legal services to low-income individuals.