

# The Resilience Symposium

White Waves Education Consulting

Trinity Episcopal Church

Hamburg, NY

Learning and Leading Together to Support Our Community  
and Prevent Adverse Childhood Experiences

## Our Guest Panelists



### **Michael Ranney, Commissioner – Erie County Office of Mental Health**

Now serving in his fourth year as Commissioner of Mental Health, Mr. Ranney has more than thirty years of administrative and clinical experience with adults and children. As Commissioner, Mr. Ranney focuses on development of policy and program implementation. His credits include correctional mental health reform for Erie County correctional settings in collaboration with the Erie County Sherriff's Office and Health Department. <http://www2.erie.gov/mentalhealth/>



### **Samantha Colson, Coordinator – Consortium on Trauma, Illness, & Grief (TIG) in Schools**

Samantha's work at Monroe County Office of Mental Health is focused on system transformation and planning. Ms. Colson helped develop and now oversees the TIG program, which is a unique cross county collaboration of comprehensive training and an integrated crisis response network. Ms. Colson has worked with children, families and older adults in a variety of settings and holds a both a Master's in Social Work and a Master's in Strategic Leadership from Roberts Wesleyan College.

<https://tigconsortium.org/>



### **Rev. Dr. Howard (Doc) Whitaker – Consulting Clinical Clergy**

The Reverend Doctor Howard W. Whitaker is a therapist, educator, and a priest of the Episcopal Church. He has been a Board Certified Chaplain to psychiatry (1994), serving in private practice, mental health, and church settings. Semi-retired, "Doc's" small private practice offers clinically based pastoral services to the church. His subspecialties are spiritual care for Trauma & Dissociation, Self-injurious Behavior, Personality Disorders, Suicide aftercare, and Religious Psychopathology & Abuse.

<http://www.howardwhitaker.net/>



### **Carraugh Reilly Nowak, Hilbert College – Chairperson of Criminal Justice Studies Division**

Ms. Reilly Nowak has worked in the field of crime scene investigations and law enforcement support for over fifteen years. She holds a Masters degree from George Washington University in forensic science and is currently an Associate Professor of Forensic Science as well as Chair of Criminal Justice Studies at Hilbert. Previously Ms. Reilly Nowak served as Chief Medicolegal Investigator for Erie County Medical Examiner's Office. She continues to serve through teaching, research and voluntary casework in missing and unidentified persons.

<https://www.hilbert.edu/academics/undergraduate-programs/criminal-justice>



### **Meredith Surdel, Hope Treatment & Counseling Center – Program Manager**

Meredith has a Master's degree in Counseling Education and Human Services with her license in Mental Health Counseling. Ms. Surdel has over 14 years of experience counseling adolescents, adults, and families in a variety of settings. The Hope Treatment & Counseling Center is a partnership of Endeavor Health Services and Inspired Health Group, providing holistic, innovative, evidence based mental health and chemical dependency treatment.

<http://www.mid-erie.org/> and <https://hopecenterwny.com/>



### **Susan Ciminelli, White Waves Education Consulting – Executive Director**

A career educator with experience as a teacher, teacher-trainer, school principal, Susan also worked twenty years as a Federal law enforcement officer with U.S. Immigration. Now retired, Susan's work focuses on consulting and training for schools and as a presenter at education conferences. Her workshops focus on building positive school relationships, trauma-informed practices in schools, and utilizing brain research for highly effective teaching.

<http://whitewaveseducation.com> and <http://traumasensitiveclassrooms.com>