

**From Identification to Lifelong Healing:
Judicial Leadership in Building
Multidisciplinary Responses to Human
Trafficking and Complex Trauma**



**ROOTED IN JUSTICE
RISING IN RHYTHM**
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Eden Centers for Hope and Healing is a movement to eradicate human trafficking with its headquarters in New Orleans. Celebrating its 15th anniversary, the 501(c)(3) nonprofit creates systemic change through five pillars: Prevention and Education; Legislative Advocacy; Economic Empowerment; Recovery and Reentry Services for victims, including emergency shelter, transitional, and long-term housing; and a Lifelong Community of Care for survivors. The nonprofit has also established Eden Market, a social enterprise that empowers survivors through employment, workforce development, and economic stability. Every Eden product tells a story of courage, healing, and hope while supporting a survivor's journey toward independence and lifetime of success.

Eden Centers have worked at the intersection of law enforcement, courts, healthcare, education, housing, and community-based services to respond to human trafficking and complex trauma. What distinguishes Eden is its comprehensive continuum of care, designed to support survivors from the moment of identification through a lifetime of recovery and community connection. Beginning in 2011 with one home, Eden now operates three dedicated facilities, including a 90-day emergency shelter located within a medical facility and two long-term residential homes that provide up to two years of housing, holistic recovery services, behavioral health support, life skills development, education, workforce preparation, and community reintegration. Eden has also begun its scaling and expansion initiative establishing its first Eden Center in Charlottesville, Virginia. Eden's integrated model recognizes that recovery from trafficking and complex trauma is not measured in days or months, but often requires a lifetime of support, stability, healing, and human connection.

Human trafficking and complex trauma cannot be addressed through law enforcement, courts, healthcare, housing, or social services acting alone. While Multidisciplinary Teams ("MDTs") and Task Forces have become recognized best practices, many communities continue to struggle with a critical challenge of sustaining support for survivors of complex trauma beyond the initial intervention. Too often, victims are identified, rescued, and connected to services, yet are lost during the transition from crisis stabilization to long term recovery.

Judges play a unique role in strengthening multidisciplinary responses by convening systems, identifying service gaps, encouraging trauma sensitive practices, and supporting accountability while protecting victim dignity, due process, and public safety. Effective MDTs require collaboration among courts, law

enforcement, prosecutors, healthcare providers, educators, housing providers, behavioral health professionals, and community organizations. When these systems work together through a coordinated continuum of care, survivors and individuals impacted by complex trauma experience greater stability, improved outcomes, and increased opportunities for long-term success.

This session will explore how communities can move beyond fragmented services to develop sustainable and scalable systems that support individuals across the lifespan. Drawing upon Eden's 15-year experience in New Orleans and its expansion into Virginia, the session will share lessons learned as Eden has begun scaling its model from a local anti-trafficking response into a broader, scalable framework for human trafficking intervention, complex trauma care, survivor support, and community-based healing.

The presentation will examine how scaling this work requires more than reproducing a program in a new location. It requires building trust-based partnerships across the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, while also engaging law enforcement, prosecutors, healthcare providers, educators, housing partners, behavioral health providers, and community-based organizations. Eden's experience demonstrates that effective scaling depends on shared values, strong local leadership, survivor centered and trauma sensitive practices, and a continuum of care that can respond both at the point of intervention and throughout a lifetime.

The session will also highlight the importance of integrating legal, judicial, healthcare, housing, and community-based perspectives. Eden's model recognizes that individuals impacted by trafficking and complex trauma often present in different systems at different moments, such as in courtrooms, hospitals, schools, shelters, detention settings, emergency departments, child welfare systems, and community programs. A coordinated response allows communities to identify needs earlier, reduce re-traumatization, improve access to services, and support long-term healing.

Participants will examine how integrating real-time intervention, emergency shelter, transitional and long-term housing, healthcare identification, complex trauma navigation, economic empowerment, and lifelong community support can strengthen outcomes for survivors and complex trauma impacted individuals while improving accountability for traffickers, buyers, abusers, and other criminally responsible parties. The presentation will also address how social enterprise and workforce development can support independence, dignity, and long-term stability. Attendees will leave with practical strategies for fostering cross-sector collaboration, strengthening MDT effectiveness, addressing the impact of human trafficking and complex trauma, and advancing and scaling human dignity and justice through sustainable models that can be adapted and replicated in jurisdictions throughout the nation.

For more information, visit Eden Centers-New Orleans at <https://eden-centers.org/> and Eden Centers-Charlottesville at <https://www.eden-centerscville.org/>

Session Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. **Identify the core components of a coordinated continuum of care** for survivors of human trafficking and individuals impacted by complex trauma, including prevention, real-time intervention, emergency shelter, long-term housing, recovery services, economic empowerment, and lifelong community support.
2. **Explain the unique role of judges and justice leaders** in strengthening multidisciplinary responses, convening system partners, identifying service gaps, encouraging trauma-informed practices, and supporting accountability while protecting dignity and due process.
3. **Recognize how complex trauma affects individuals' interactions with courts, law enforcement, healthcare, housing, education, behavioral health, and social services**, and why long-term recovery requires support beyond the initial crisis intervention.
4. **Distinguish the specific needs of human trafficking survivors while understanding the broader impact of complex trauma** on children, families, survivors, and justice-involved individuals.
5. **Describe how legal, judicial, healthcare, education, and community-based partners can work together** to identify human trafficking, respond to complex trauma, reduce re-traumatization, and connect individuals to coordinated care.
6. **Examine lessons from Eden Centers' New Orleans model and its expansion into Virginia** to understand how survivor centered and trauma sensitive programs can begin to scale while remaining responsive to local community needs.
7. **Evaluate the role of economic empowerment and workforce development** in long-term recovery, including how social enterprise models can support stability, independence, dignity, and long-term success.
8. **Develop practical strategies for strengthening MDTs and task forces** so that communities can move from fragmented services toward sustainable, scalable, trauma-informed systems of care.
9. **Assess key considerations for scaling models that address both human trafficking and complex trauma**, including local partnerships, judicial leadership, healthcare engagement, housing capacity, behavioral health support, trauma-informed training, and lifelong community care.

Speakers:



Jennifer Best, CEO, Eden Centers for Hope and Healing of New Orleans

Jennifer is a Licensed Professional Counselor-Supervisor and a National Board Certified Counselor. She received an M.A. in Psychology and Counseling at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. She has extensive training in trauma informed care including TBRI, EMDR, and TF-CBT. She has spent her time working in private and nonprofit counseling centers. She has obtained a certificate in Human Trafficking Prevention and Intervention from Florida State University and has been trained as a prevention education facilitator through My Life My Choice in Boston, MA. She is a member of the Greater New Orleans Human Trafficking Task Force. She sits on the advisory board for The Office of

Human Trafficking Prevention and Commission for the State of Louisiana. She is the co-chair for the subcommittee for adult sex trafficking for the Office of Human Trafficking Prevention and Commission. Through trusted partnerships with Homeland Security Investigations, local law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and multidisciplinary teams, Jennifer oversees Eden's trafficking-informed crisis response program. Jennifer and Eden counselors are called to accompany law enforcement during operations and arrests to provide immediate survivor-centered intervention, crisis stabilization, safety planning, and connection to emergency shelter and ongoing services at the earliest point of identification. As CEO, Jennifer provides the operational leadership for Eden's continuum of care, overseeing the organization's emergency shelter, long-term residential programs, multidisciplinary partnerships, and trauma-informed services that promote long-term healing, dignity, independence, and lifelong community support for survivors of human trafficking and complex trauma.



**Dr. Miriam "Mae" Lobrano Furr, University of Virginia Pediatrician;
President and CEO, Eden Centers for Hope and Healing of Charlottesville**

Dr. Furr recently completed her role as Chief Resident in Pediatrics at the University of Virginia (UVA) and now practices as a general pediatrician across multiple UVA clinics. She earned her undergraduate degree from Tulane University, where she founded the Free the Slaves Coalition to raise awareness of human trafficking and partnered with Eden Centers for Hope and Healing to support the establishment of New Orleans' first recovery home for survivors of trafficking and exploitation. During medical school at LSU Health Shreveport, Dr. Furr focused on identifying human trafficking in healthcare settings, developing educational curricula and providing trainings to healthcare professionals across Louisiana and Texas. While at UVA, she helped establish a Human Trafficking Elective for medical trainees and has continued to educate healthcare providers on recognizing and responding to trafficking and complex trauma. Dr. Furr currently serves as President of the Central Virginia Anti-Human Trafficking Collaborative and founded the Charlottesville branch of Eden Centers for Hope and Healing to expand services for survivors throughout Central Virginia. Through Eden, she oversees the development of a Complex Trauma Care Navigator program designed to help survivors access coordinated medical, behavioral health, legal, and social services, while also leading healthcare-focused training initiatives to strengthen community capacity for trauma-informed identification and response. Dr. Furr also serves as Co-Medical Director of Camp Holiday Trails, a nonprofit camp for children and adolescents with chronic illnesses, disabilities, and special healthcare needs. Her professional interests include child advocacy, trauma-sensitive care, human trafficking prevention, and building collaborative systems that improve outcomes for vulnerable children and families. Dr. Furr plans to pursue fellowship training in Child Abuse Pediatrics and remains committed to advancing multidisciplinary approaches to the care of children and survivors of complex trauma.



Hon. Joy Cossich Lobrano, Founding Board of Directors, Eden Centers for Hope and Healing

Judge Lobrano serves on the Louisiana Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal and is a former prosecutor and Juvenile, Family, Civil, and Criminal Trial Court judge. She is a recognized leader in juvenile justice, child welfare, human trafficking prevention, and community-based intervention systems. Judge Lobrano is a founder of the Community CARE Centers for Early Intervention, which celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2025 and has become a recognized model for prevention, early intervention, family support, behavioral health services, and multidisciplinary collaboration among the education, healthcare, and justice systems. She also created two school-based prevention and justice education programs: Project LEAD in 2000, a sixth-grade law-related education program taught by prosecutors, and Project LAWellness in 2009, a judicially led wellness and prevention initiative that brings judges, healthcare professionals, educators, and community partners into schools. Together, these programs help build trust, promote healthy and lawful decision making, and connect children and families to community resources. In addition to her anti-trafficking work with Eden Centers, Judge Lobrano served as 2017-2019 Chair of the Louisiana Human Trafficking Prevention Commission and is a frequent speaker at the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences at the Vatican on issues involving human trafficking, justice, democracy, artificial intelligence, family, education, human dignity, and integral human development. Judge Lobrano earned her B.A. from Tulane University, her J.D. from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, and her LL.M. in Taxation from New York University School of Law. Throughout her career, she has focused on building collaborative systems that improve outcomes for children, families, and survivors while strengthening community well-being and public safety.



Kara Van de Carr, Founder and President, Eden Centers for Hope and Healing

Kara is an attorney and former United States Diplomat responsible for writing the Trafficking in Persons Report for the country of Jamaica. As a founder, the visionary and community leader, and President of Eden Centers for Hope and Healing, Kara established a first-of-its-kind continuum of care for survivors of human trafficking and exploitation. Under her leadership, Eden has grown from a community-based response into a recognized model providing emergency shelter, long term housing, recovery services, and survivor centered support. Kara has forged trust-based relationships across the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, allowing Eden to build practical partnerships with each, particularly with law enforcement and Homeland Security. Kara continues to lead Eden's next phase of growth, including the scaling of the Eden model beyond Louisiana and the development of replicable systems for other communities. She also helped create Eden Market, a social enterprise that supports survivor economic stability through employment, skill building, and dignified work opportunities. Her work reflects a long-standing commitment to building practical, sustainable pathways for survivors of human trafficking from crisis intervention to lifelong recovery. She has worked to educate leaders in the criminal justice system on the gravity of human trafficking and the revictimization that individuals who are arrested experience.

She also has taught Continuing Legal Education courses to legal professionals on these subjects and was an adjunct professor at Tulane University for a course on Human Trafficking. Kara has also received several awards from the Federal Bar Association in recognition of her demonstrated leadership and service to the legal profession. She received her B.A. in Political Economy of Industrial Societies from University of California Berkeley, her J.D. from Tulane Law School, and her LL.M. in International Law from Georgetown Law School.