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# COUNTY OF ERIE

**MARK C. POLONCARZ**

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

January 9, 2019

Erie County Legislature  
92 Franklin St.  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Honorable Members,

Pursuant to the powers vested in me by Section 1303 of the Erie County Charter, I hereby appoint the following people to the Erie County Mental Hygiene Community Services Board for the terms stated below.

**Reappointments:**

Gladys Diji  
194 Exeter Road  
Williamsville, New York 14221  
**Term Expires: 12/21/2020**

Karl Shallowhorn  
71 Margaret Road  
Amherst, New York 14226  
**Term Expires: 12/31/2020**

Charles Syms  
University at Buffalo  
School of Social Work  
685 Baldy Hall  
Buffalo, New York 14260  
**Term Expires: 12/21/2020**

**New Appointments:**

Mercedes Busby  
1118 Brauncroft Lane  
Amherst, New York 14226  
**Term Expires: 12/31/2021**

Elizabeth Smith, BA, CASAC  
115 Angelacrest Lane  
West Seneca, New York 14224  
**Term Expires: 12/31/2021**

Sincerely Yours,

Mark C. Poloncarz  
Erie County Executive

cc: Michael Ranney, Commissioner of Erie County Department of Mental Health  
Appointees

# GLADYS J. DIJI

194 Exeter Road • Williamsville, NY 14221 • 716-984-1331

[gjdiji@roadrunner.com](mailto:gjdiji@roadrunner.com)

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## OVERVIEW

Administrative, Nursing & Clinical Nursing Instructor

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## CORE COMPETENCIES

NURSING, INSTRUCTOR, DIVERSITY PLANNING AND COMPLIANCE MANAGER

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**D'Youville College Buffalo, NY** **1998 - Present**  
*Adjunct Clinical Professor, Department of Nursing*

- Clinical instructor providing instruction and clinical supervision to nursing students working with patients diagnosed with mental illness in in-patient and out-patient setting including a detox facility.

**Buffalo Psychiatric Center** **1978 – 2013**  
*Registered Nurse*  
*Diversity Planning and Compliance Coordinator*

### *Administrative:*

- Investigated complaints of discrimination.
- Responded to NYS Division of Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Employment for human rights complaints filed by employees.
- Reviewed and determined requests for Reasonable Accommodations.
- Participated and assisted in interviews for staffing and high level applicants, working closely with Human Resources assuring compliance for diverse staffing.
- Assisted in required interrogations, including working jointly with Human Resources on allegations filed against employees.
- Attended and participated in monthly cabinet meetings.
- Trained employees in Diversity and Discrimination including sexual harassment prevention.

**Buffalo Psychiatric Center** **1978 - 2003**  
*Registered Nurse*

- Coordinator Community Outreach Team.
- Diagnosed and treated patients responding to an actual or potential response to a medical or psychiatric diagnosis and substance abuse.
- One on one with assigned caseload of patients of suffering from mental illness and substance.
- Administrated prescribed medication.
- Scheduled and followed-up on patients medical appointments, recommended treatments and tests.
- Documented required information in patient records.
- Conducted monthly staff meetings.
- Attended and participated in monthly management meetings making recommendations to improve patient's outcomes and program enhancements.

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### **EDUCATION**

Graduate program in Community Addictions Nursing May, 1998 – D'Youville College, Buffalo, NY  
Master of Science in Nursing (Community Health) May, 1991 – D'Youville College, Buffalo, NY  
Bachelor of Science Nursing May, 1986 - D'Youville College Buffalo, NY

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### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Quality Assurance Award
  - Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing
  - Black Achievers Award
  - YWCA Leadership Award
  - National Negro Business Women Community Service Award
  - Graduate Board of Governance
  - Contributing Author, "Uncrown Queens, African American Builders of Western NY"
  - Contributing Author "Go Tell Michelle"
  - Utopian, Euphoria, "Women Making History", Lifetime Achievement
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### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

Professional Nurses Association of Western New York  
Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society

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### **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

- Board Member WNY Nurse House
  - Board Member Buffalo Federal Neighborhood Center
- Appointment to NYS, Commission on Quality Care, Surrogate Decision Making Committee
- Active member with community organization providing health awareness education, clothing, scholarships and food to underserved populations.

**Education and Certifications:**

**State University College of New York at Buffalo**

Master in Science - Student Personnel Administration, 1998

Bachelor of Arts - Broadcasting, 1987

**Erie Community College**

Coursework in Alcoholism Counseling curriculum, 1990-1992

**New York State Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor**

**Mental Health First Aid Instructor – Youth, Adults, Veterans, Higher Education, and Older Adults**

**Mental Health Works (Canadian Mental Health Association)**

**Coping with Work and Family Stress (SAMHSA NREPP)**

**Experience:**

**Community Health Center of Buffalo**

**Education Program Coordinator**

- Project Director for SAMHSA MHAT Grant. Oversee all grant activities including data reporting and Mental Health First Aid trainings. Deliver Mental Health First Aid trainings.
- Team member for SafeHome community re-integration re-entry program for individuals returning from prison. Coordinate trainings for staff and community.
- Deliver mental health and wellness workshops for CHCB staff.
- Produce and host CHCB podcast.
- Develop community-based forums focusing on mental health.

**Therapy.Live – Prepare U**

**Director of Curriculum Implementation (January 2018-June 2018)**

- Promoted and marketed the Prepare U Mental Health Education Curriculum.
- Participated in informational webinars for Prepare U.
- Met with school personnel and assist in other educational initiatives including the development of needs assessments and professional development in-service trainings.

**Mental Health Association of Erie County and Compeer of Greater Buffalo**

**Director of Community Advocacy (January 2014 – December 2017)**

- Project Director for SAMHSA Project-AWARE Grant. Coordinated collaboration between Compeer and Erie Community College. Oversaw all grant activity, including the Interagency Advisory Committee. Submitted quarterly/annual reports on program activity.
- Supervised Manager of Workplace Wellbeing, AmeriCorps service member and Mental Health First Aid Instructors.
- Assisted in coordinating the New York State Delivery Services Reform Incentive Program (DSRIP) efforts for the MHA and Compeer. Acted as liaison between MHA/Compeer and Millennium Collaborative Care and Community Health Partners of WNY.
- Expanded community outreach through public forums, media and public relations.
- Created, coordinated and presented workplace wellness program for local businesses and organizations including topics such as workplace wellness, self-care, bullying in the workplace and employee engagement.
- Coordinated Mental Health First Aid program and provided trainings in the Western New York region.
- Coordinated community advocacy efforts on behalf of the MHA and Compeer.

**Venture Forthe, Inc.**

**Service Coordinator (September 2013 – January 2014)**

- Provided service coordination for individuals living with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Created and revised service plans for program participants.
- Facilitated clinical team meetings.

**Horizon Health Services**

**Senior Counselor – Addiction Specialist (March 2010 - September 2013)**

- Provided group and individual counseling to consumers in Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS) Program and actively participated in case conference, case discussion and regular team meetings.
- Facilitated co-occurring disorders groups.
- Prepared Individualized Recovery Plans for consumers.

**Kaleida Health System (Buffalo General Hospital)**

**Alcoholism/Hospital Intervention Counselor (June 1992 – June 1998)**

- Assessed patients for chemical dependency according to DSM-IV criteria.
- Conducted didactic and process group therapy as well as individual counseling.
- Participated in weekly case conference meetings.
- Provided patient and staff education on chemical dependency and treatment as well as community agencies.
- Conducted hospital-based assessments and referred patients to appropriate level of care.
- Served as liaison to Cheektowaga Drug Court.

**Horizon Health Services (September 2014 - present)**

**Community Peer Representative**

- Member of Special Review and Alternate Care Committees.
- Contributor to monthly “On the Horizon” clinical newsletter.

**Western New York Children’s Psychiatric Center (2009 – 2014)**

**Consultant**

- Developed ACCESS, a 10-week pre-collegiate program for high school students with mental health challenges.
- Conduct motivational and career-focused presentations for students.

**Horizon Health Services (2008 – 2010)**

**Consultant**

- Developed the Working on Wellness (WOW) class for the PROS Program.
- Facilitated weekly WOW group. Provided group members with information and resources to improve participants’ mental and physical health.

**The Mighty (September 2017 – present)**

- Contributing writer

**The Journey – United Church of Christ Mental Health Network Blog (May 2017 – present)**

- Coordinator and contributing blogger.

**BP (Bipolar) Magazine – bphope.com (June 2012 – present)**

- Write articles, blogs and produce vlog posts on Bipolar Disorder/mental health-related topics for the magazine and website.

**HealthyPlace.com**

**Blogger – Debunking Addiction (April 2012 – May 2013)**

- Wrote weekly blog on addiction-related topics for website that receives 1 million+ visits per month.

**Additional Experience – Higher Education**

**Daemen College**

**Associate Director Graduate Admissions (April 2006 – March 2010)**

- Duties included coordinating graduate admissions for Physical Therapy, Special Education, Executive Leadership, and Global Business Programs, supervising support staff, and conduct information sessions for Canadian Scholars Education Program. Also coordinated graduate open house and served as Chair of the Veterans Advisory Council. Actively recruited students at regional graduate fairs in New York, Southern Ontario, and China.

**Genesee Community College, Batavia, NY**

**Director of Advisement, Career/Transfer, Counseling, and Evaluation (June 2004 – April 2006)**

- Duties included coordinating day-to-day operations of the Center for Academic Progress (CAP) and the Advisement Center, Career and Transfer Office, including supervising and evaluating staff, managing the budget, developing long-range plans, and periodic reporting. Supervised Career Development Center staff and provided support for department activities and conducted monthly all-advisor meetings that include advisement staff from the five Genesee Community College campus centers. Coordinated appropriate instructional support systems that include an assisted computer lab, tutorial services, and academic testing service, and specialized instructional equipment for students with disabilities. Served as the coordinator of services for students with disabilities.

**SUNY Buffalo State**

**Coordinator, Transfer Student Services (August 1999 – June 2004)**

- Duties included facilitating the development of new and renewed articulation agreements between Buffalo State academic departments and departments at other 2-year and 4-year colleges and served as the resource person for new articulation initiatives at the state and national level as a member of the New York State Transfer and Articulation Association. Responsible for the development and supervision of graduate interns. Consulted with the admissions staff on transfer issues including Joint Admissions and Joint Teacher Preparation programs, and the coordination and development of new programs. Served as a liaison with faculty to provide information regarding potential articulation agreements and to promote outreach to the transfer population. Planned, developed and conducted the “Academic Policies and Degree Requirements” presentation during freshman and transfer orientation programs, including demonstration of web-based audit and registration systems designed to help retain students at the undergraduate level. Supervised graduate intern.

**Admissions Assistant (July 1998 – August 1999)**

- Duties included participating in all facets of the college’s recruitment program, including high school and community college visits, and open house. Served as President’s All-College Honors Program Board Member.

**Presentations:**

- Delivered numerous presentations and keynote speeches on the topics of mental illness, co-occurring disorders, spirituality and mental health, and youth mental health including, including the United Church of Christ WISE Conference, United Church of Christ (UCC) National Youth Event, the National UCC Widening the Welcome Conference, Mental Health Association in New York State Annual Conference, the New York State Youth Bureau Conference, the WNY Regional Family Peer Advocate Retreat, the Association of Community Living Western Regional and State Conferences, the WNY Collegiate Consortium of Disability Advocates, the Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, the WNY Children’s Psychiatric Center, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (Buffalo chapter).

**Publications:**

- Bipolar struggle leads counselor to a wonderful life (article subject) *Buffalo News, December 2017*
- The spirit of the matter – *BP magazine, July 2016*
- Discrimination slows treatment of mental illness – *Buffalo News, June 2016*
- Many children would be hurt by move to adult facility – *Buffalo News, February 2014*
- The significance of significant others – *BP Magazine, July 2013*
- On My Mind – *BP Magazine, April, 2012*
- Every child needs love and support of family – *Buffalo News, March, 2012*
- Hope is the medication to ease societal stigma – *Buffalo News, July, 2011*
- Working on Wellness: A Practical Guide to Mental Health, September 2010 (Chipmunka Publishing)
- Many living well with disability – *Buffalo News, September, 2008*

**Organizations and Boards:**

- WNED/WBFO Mental Health Advisory Council – April 2018-Present
- Mental Health Association of Erie County Board of Directors – April 2018-Present
- United Church of Christ New York Conference Board of Directors – April 2018-Present
- Health Foundation of Western and Central New York – Health Leadership Fellows Program – September 2017-Present
- Mental Health Association in New York State – Board of Directors/ Chair Affiliate Relations Committee – January 2013-Present
- Erie County Mental Hygiene Community Services Board - September 2014-Present
- United Church of Christ Mental Health Network - Board of Directors – March 2015-Present
- Pilgrim-St. Luke's-El Nuevo Camino United Church of Christ - Board of Trustees – July 2015-Present

**Awards:**

- Mental Health Association in New York State Caroline Cash Award - October 2018
- Mary B. Talbert Civic & Cultural Club – Unsung Heroes Award – April 2018
- Buffalo Black Achievers Award - October 2017
- Men of Integrity Award – November 2017
- Sweet Home High School Distinguished Alumni Wall of Fame – November 2016
- Friendship Foundation Courage to Come Back Award – November 2015
- Mental Health Association of Erie County Courage to Come Back Award – March 2015
- Compeer of Greater Buffalo Googie Butler Award for Advocacy – 2012
- Horizon Health Services Professional Service Award – 2012
- Horizon Health Services Community Leadership Award - 2011
- Horizon Health Services Rehabilitation Service Award – 2010
- Erie County Executive Disabilities Award - 2008
- Religious Service Award – Network of Religious Communities – 2008

# CHARLES D. SYMS

University at Buffalo, School of Social Work  
685 Baldy Hall  
Buffalo, New York 14260-1050  
(716) 615-1225  
syms@buffalo.edu

## EDUCATION

Master's of Social Work	California State University at Sacramento Sacramento, California (1979)
Bachelor's of Arts in Urban Studies	State University College at Buffalo Buffalo, New York (1975)

## CERTIFICATIONS

Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)	State of New York
Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW)	National Association of Social Workers
PRIME for Life (Drinking Driving Instructor)	Prevention Research Institute and New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

School of Social Work, State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY  
**Clinical Associate Professor** (5/06 – present)  
**Clinical Assistant Professor** (9/98 – 5/06)

As a member of the faculty provided instruction and advisement to graduate level students.

- Provides instruction of first year intervention and human behavior courses
- Provides instruction of second year concentration courses, primarily in the Alcohol and Other Drug Problems Concentration

Children's Services Department, Child and Family Services of Buffalo and Erie County, Buffalo, NY

**Program Director** (1/96 - 8/98)

This a management position within a large multi-service family service agency.

Responsibilities included:

- Overall administration and supervision of child welfare programs; including adoption and special needs adoption, regular and therapeutic foster care, child protective services, recruitment/retention of resource families and parents
- Supervision of 47 full and part-time employees and approximately 70 resource parents
- Identification of policy/program needs, and where appropriate recommends and implements policy/ program development within the agency and broader community
- Assures accountability to Agency boards and committees, as well as contract and oversight agencies.

Clearview Treatment Services, Mount Saint Mary's Hospital, Lewiston, NY



**Mental Health Specialist/Alcoholism Counselor III** (6/91 - 12/95)

As a member of a multi-disciplinary team, provides chemical dependency treatment to adults in an in-patient rehabilitation program. Duties included:

- Clinical supervision of addiction counseling staff
- Provides administrative supervision of the unit in absence of Director
- As part of the management team, develops and maintains agency standards of treatment
- Develops and implements specialized programming for individuals with co-occurring disorders (mental illness and substance misuse)
- Conducts psychotherapeutic and psycho-educational groups
- Acts as agency representative to community committees, groups and task forces
- Conducts training/in-services on the unit and in the community

New York State Office of Mental Health, Attica Correctional Facility, Attica, NY

**Psychiatric Social Worker II-Forensic** (7/90 - 2/91)

As a member of a multi-disciplinary team, provided out-patient mental health services to individuals incarcerated at the state correctional facility. Duties included:

- Emergency assessment and crisis intervention; and when appropriate, directed admission to facility residential crisis treatment program
- Acted as clinical coordinator in two of the facility's special housing units
- Conducted client assessments, treatment planning, and individual therapeutic intervention

Erie County Department of Social Services, Buffalo, NY

**Clinical Specialist-Child Protective Services** (3/83 - 7/90)

As a member of the Director's administrative team, provided clinical consultation to Child Protective Services staff. Duties included:

- Specialized diagnostic assessment and clinical consultation to staff on difficult or complex cases
- Participated in development of methods and standards of assessment of risk and goal-oriented treatment planning
- Provided specialized consultation to the Sexual Abuse Team
- Acted as agency liaison/representative to various agencies, committees, groups and task forces
- Provided training and technical assistance to professional individuals and groups

Erie County Department of Social Services, Buffalo, NY

**Senior Child Protective Services Worker** (7/79 - 3/83)

Responsible for the investigation and validation of reports of child abuse and maltreatment. Duties included:

- Assessment of levels of risk in home environment
- Determined need for, formulated and implemented service plans to make home safe
- As assigned, provided technical assistance with investigations and service plan development to protective services workers and protective services worker trainees

Additional Professional Employment

Crossroads Driving Programs, Lancaster, NY (10/10 –present)

**Instructor**

Provides screening and in-class instruction to motorist convicted of substance impaired driving.

The Child Advocacy Center of Niagara, Niagara Falls, NY (1/03-2014)

**Social Work Consultant**

Provided supervision to staff providing clinical services to child victims of sexual and physical abuse.

Gilda's Club, Buffalo, NY (1/05–10/10)

**Men's Networking Group Leader**

Mutual aid group leader for men who were living with women living with cancer.

Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers, Buffalo NY (1/95-1/97)

**MICA Consultant**

Provided programmatic, policy, and case consultation to psychiatric social club and community residence staff. Part of team that developed a support group for individuals with co-occurring mental illness and substance misuse.

Child and Family Services of Erie County, Buffalo, NY (1/88-1/95)

**Group Leader-Domestic Violence**

(7/02-7/03)

Conducted psychotherapeutic and psycho-educational interventions treatment groups for men and women in abusive/ battering relationships. Conducted clinical assessment of batterers and victims for domestic violence program admission and placement.

Planned Parenthood of Buffalo and Erie County, Buffalo, NY (1/94-1/95)

Planned Parenthood of Niagara County, Niagara Falls, NY (1/94-1/97)

**Social Worker Consultant**

Provided guidance to professional staff in establishing the policies and procedures for counseling and social services activities. Provided in-service education, as needed, for clinical staff.

Visiting Nursing Association of Western New York, Amherst, NY (1/90-1/94)

**Trainer**

Provided required New York State training to those mandated to report child abuse and maltreatment.

**AWARDS**

Community Advocacy Award (1998) – The (Erie County) Citizen's Committee on Rape and Sexual Assault, Inc

**HONORS**

Faculty of the Year (2007) – School of Social Work, University at Buffalo

**Professional Membership/Activities**

Boston University/NIDA Minority (Researchers) Capacity Training Program. Selected as a member of cohort 2. Summers 2001 and 2002.

National Association of Social Workers

### SERVICE

#### School of Social Work:

Chair, Academic Committee

Chair, Alcohol and Other Drug Problems Concentration

Admissions Committee

Diversity and Policy Sequence

Personnel Committee

"InSocialWork" Podcast Co-host

Recruitment Committee

Research Advisory Committee

School of Social Work/Office of Mental Health Evidence Based Project - Children and

Adolescents Project Advisory Board

Sequence and Chairs Committee

#### Profession:

National Association of Social Workers (NASW) – member of the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Specialty Practice Section (2009-2011; 2013 - ).

Editorial review of proposed book – Battista, A. and Iverson Hitchcock, L., *Social Media for Professional Practice: Integration into Social Work Pedagogy* (2013).

Editorial review of proposed text – Drugs and Alcohol in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, chapters 7-12 (2009)

National Association of Children of Alcoholics (NACoA) – invited member of panel social work educators/trainers developing competencies regarding children of alcohol/drug abusers to be infused into social work curriculum. (2005)

National Association of Social Workers (NASW) – invited member of task force that developed and wrote the NASW's first set of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Practice Standards. (2004)

#### Community:

United Methodist Church, Niagara Conference – Board of Ordained Ministry

United Methodist Church, Upper New York Conference - Sexual Ethics Committee (2011 - present)

United Way of Buffalo and Erie County, Volunteer Investment Reviewer (2010, 2012 - )

Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers – (2010 - present; President: 2014 - )

Erie County Department of Mental Health's Community Services Board – Alcohol and Substance Abuse Subcommittee (Member)

Institute for Professional Development in the Addictions – invited member of a group to make recommendations for recruitment and retention of frontline addictions counselors. (2005)

Lakeshore Behavioral Health – Board member, 2000 - present (Vice-president: 2010 -)

New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) –

Credentials Board (formally the Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse

Counselor (CASAC) Certification Board, (2002 – present; Chair: 2010 – 2012)

New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) –

Workgroup on Scope of Practice (2010-2013)  
Regional Coordinating Council for Integrated Training on Co-occurring Mental Health  
and Substance Abuse Disorders (2005 – 2007)

### PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS/TRAININGS

"Screening for Substance Use Disorders in Adolescents: The What, The Why, The How." Child and Adolescent Treatment Services, Buffalo, NY (2014).

"Overview of Co-occurring Disorders in Adolescents", University at Buffalo-School of Social Work, Continuing Education, Buffalo, NY (2010).

"Understanding the Impact of Addiction on the Family System." University at Buffalo-School of Social Work, Continuing Education/Erie County Department of Social Services, Buffalo, NY (2010).

"Substance Abuse and Families." University at Buffalo-School of Social Work, Continuing Education, Buffalo, NY (2009).

"Substance Abuse and Families." University at Buffalo-School of Social Work, Continuing Education/Erie County Department of Social Services, Buffalo, NY (2009).

"Addressing the Impact of Addiction on Families." University at Buffalo-School of Social Work, Continuing Education, Buffalo, NY (2007).

### PUBLICATIONS

Syms, C. (2015, Summer). Screening, Brief Intervention, and Refer to Treatment (SBRIT): Another Tool for the Kit. *National Association of Social Workers: Specialty Practice Section (ATOD)*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.socialworkers.org/assets/secured/documents/sections/atod/newsletters/2015%20ATOD%20Summer%20Issue.pdf>.

Wiechelt, S., Lutz, W., Smyth, N., & Syms, C. (2008). Integrating research and practice: A collaborative model for addressing trauma and addiction. In Bride, B.E., & MacMaster, S.A. (Eds.). *Stress, trauma, and substance use*. London: Routledge.

Caley, L. Syms, C., Robinson, L., Cederbaum, J., Henry, M. & Shipkey, N. (2008). What human service professionals know and want to know about fetal alcohol syndrome. *Canadian Journal of Clinical Pharmacology*, 15(1), e117-e123.

Smyth, N. and Syms, C. (2007). Alcohol Abuse. In B.A. Thyer & J.S. Wodarski (Eds.), *Social Work in Mental Health: An Evidence-Based Approach* (pp. 157-182). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

National Association of Social Workers (2005). *NASW Standards for Social Work Practice with Clients with Substance Use Disorders*. Washington, D.C.: NASW

Wiechelt, S., Lutz, W., Smyth, N. & Syms, C. (2004). Integrating Research and Practice: A Collaborative Model for Addressing Trauma and Addiction. *Stress, Trauma, and Crisis*, 8, 179-193.

### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS and WORKSHOPS

[Conference workshop with Sobota, P.] Motivational Interviewing: Applications to Drug Court. "The Court and Defendant Working Together" – New York State Association of Drug Treatment Courts Professionals, 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference (2008)

[Conference panel with Wiechelt, S. Swarthout, J., Roche, E.] Assessing Trauma in Addiction Treatment: A Research Practice Collaboration. "Strengthening Systems, Investing for Results" - *New York State Association of Drug Treatment Court Professionals*, 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference (2004)

[Conference workshop] Understanding Co-Occurring Disorders. *"Treatment Courts Past, Present, and Future: Your Expectations, Our Realities"* – New York State Association of Drug Treatment Court Professionals, 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference (2003)

[Conference panel with Wiechelt, S. Swarthout, J., Roche, E.] Integrating Trauma Screening: Research Practice Collaboration. *"Women, Trauma, and Addictions"* – 15<sup>th</sup> Annual ADPA Women's Issue Conference, Alcohol and Drug Problems Association of North America (2003)

[Conference panel with Wiechelt, S. Swarthout, J., Roche, E.] Implementing System Change: A Practice-Research Partnership on Trauma and Addictions. *"Strengthening Partnerships"* - New York State Association of Substance Abuse Providers 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide Conference (2002)

[Conference Presentation] A School Violence Intervention Project: Practical Considerations for a University (and CBO) and School Collaboration. *"Leave No Child Behind: Improving Under-performing Urban Schools"* - A State University of New York at Albany Conversations Across the Disciplines Conference (2002)

[Conference panel with Monaco, A., Randolph, K., Sylves, A.F.] Innovative Models for Children & Adolescent with Special Needs. *"Special Needs and Social Justice: a collaborative approach"* – The Mental Health Association of Erie County (2001)

[Workshop with Swarthout, J.] Mental Health Issues in Health Care for Minorities. *"Narrowing the Gap: Decreasing Disparities in Minority Health"* – Minority Health Coalition, Health Connection, Catholic Health Systems (2001)

# Mercedes Busby

118 Brauncroft Lane, Amherst, NY 14226  
[mercedesb1224@hotmail.com](mailto:mercedesb1224@hotmail.com) | (716)-275-4131

## EDUCATION

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**Regents Diploma** June 2013  
Amherst High School – Amherst, NY

- Focused on career and finance courses to learn independent living skills

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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**Tops Markets Scholarship** June 2013

**Girl Scouts - Troop 1109** 2001-2013

- Community Service Awards: Bronze, Silver, Gold
- Leader, Camp Seven Hills in Holland, NY

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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**Youth Peer Advocate**, Erie Mental Health Association October 2017 – Present  
Buffalo, NY

- Trained through the NYS System of Care
- Advocates for effective care of children/youth based on their needs
- Promotes the importance of strong self-care for youth
- Supports families by helping them to understand it's okay to be different/not okay
- Works on a team alongside a care manager and family advocate
- Engages with multiple professionals (doctors, parents, school officials) to promote the best interests of youth and their families

**Teacher Assistant**, ABC Learn and Play June - August 2017  
Buffalo, NY

- Developed and taught lesson plans for children that were educational and fun
- Supported other classroom activities (preparing snack, keeping the classroom clean and safe)

**Team Leader**, Just for Kids - Hiem Elementary June - August 2016  
Williamsville, NY

- Provided homework help for students in kindergarten through fifth grade
- Developed and taught lesson plans for children that were educational and fun
- Supported other classroom activities (preparing snack, keeping the classroom clean and safe)

**Playroom Associate**, BAC for Women June – August 2015  
Williamsville, NY

- Provided child care for children as young as six months
- Led arts & crafts sessions for older children
- Supported other classroom activities (preparing snack, keeping the classroom clean and safe)

## SKILLS & TRAININGS

- 
- Computer: Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Fidelity EHR
  - Mandated Reporter Training

## REFERENCES

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Jackie Chavers  
(716) 341 - 2129

Samantha Dunkle  
(716) 884 - 5375

Karen Lumia  
(716) 867-6739

# Elizabeth Smith, BA, CASAC

(716)-830-0475, 716-394-1685

115 Angelacrest Lane, West Seneca, NY 14224

esmith@hubwny.org

## Objective

To advance in my career goals at Acacia Network, Inc. My leadership skills and expertise foster continued growth and development of existing and new behavioral health programs within the organization. During my tenure with Acacia, I have been instrumental in contributing to the development of start-up opioid treatment and chemical dependence outpatient treatment programs. I have established “model” programs with implementation of new services, expanded hours of operation and increased access to treatment.

## Experience

### 10/2015 – Present | Program Director

Promesa, Inc.- Alba de Vida, Acacia Network | 254 Virginia St., Buffalo, NY

Providing direct management and oversight of daily operations within opioid treatment and chemical dependence outpatient treatment programs. Manage clinic operations to budgeted and planned results. Ensuring regulatory compliance with DEA, OASAS, SAMHSA and Joint Commission standards by implementing necessary policies and procedures. Promoting staff growth and development to enhance staff performance and program services by providing ongoing supervision and trainings. Implementation of new services to include HIV Early Intervention and Opioid Overdose Prevention programs. Expansion of program services to include additional medication assisted treatment therapies and increased access to treatment. Effectively communicating and collaborating with administrative leadership team to develop new behavioral health programs and provide new services. Facilitating community meetings and providing outreach and marketing for existing and new outpatient programs. Responsible for ongoing program planning and development.

### 07/2014 – 10/2015 | Director of Methadone Services

Promesa, Inc.- Alba de Vida, Acacia Network | 254 Virginia St., Buffalo, NY

Implementing OASAS, Joint Commission, SAMHSA and DEA regulations and developing facility policies and procedures to meet expected requirements within opioid treatment program. Providing ongoing training to staff on addiction, medication assisted recovery options and opioid treatment program regulations and requirements. Providing supervision to staff and effectively using evidence based approaches to treat clientele. Fostering the growth of my supervisees by offering performance evaluation, training, supervision and support. Maintaining a partial caseload, providing individual and group counseling and record keeping. Participating in trainings, team meetings, communicating with administrative team and medical staff. Thirteen years of opioid and addictions treatment experience.



**09/2002 – 07/2014 | Supervising Counselor in Opioid Treatment Program**  
Pathways, Sisters of Charity Hospital | 158 Holden St., Buffalo, NY

Implementing OASAS, Joint Commission, SAMHSA and DEA regulations and developing facility policies and procedures to meet expected requirements. Educating staff on methadone maintenance/opioid treatment, regulations and maintaining timely documentation. Providing supervision to staff and effectively using evidence based approaches to treat clientele. Addressing crisis situations as they occur. Fostering the growth of my supervisees by offering training, supervision and support. Maintaining a partial caseload, providing individual and group counseling and record keeping. Participating in trainings, team meetings, communicating with administration and medical staff. Twelve years of methadone maintenance experience.

**01/2002 – 04/2006 | Respite Worker**  
Joan A. Male Family Support Center (Parents Anonymous) | 60 Dingens St., Buffalo, NY

Provide respite services for individuals who need relief from their child care responsibilities. Supervise children and maintain documentation and progress notes on each child. Responsible for maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of the families. Provide a positive role modeling and mentoring for the children.

**08/2001 – 01/2002 | Child Care Worker**  
Hopevale, INC. | 3780 Howard Rd., Hamburg, NY

Guide residents within the residential program through positive role modeling and mentoring. Practice Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) with the residents. Responsible for documenting and monitoring critical incidents throughout the facility. Paperwork consisting of log entries and reports on residents, crises, incidents and illnesses.

## Skills

- Exceptional interpersonal and communication
- Superior organizational and creative problem solving abilities
- Detail oriented and effective time management
- Well-developed leader, team builder and a skillful motivator
- Reliable, fast learner, loyal and compassionate
- Extensive knowledge of policies, procedures and regulatory requirements

## Languages

Fluent in Macedonian; Versed in Spanish

## Activities

Martial Artist; Black Belt in Isshin-Ryu karate 11/1994-Present

President of St. Cyril and Methody Macedonian Orthodox Church Board



## Education

### 1998-2002 | Hilbert College/Bachelor of Arts, Psychology

- Received the Social Science Dept. Award for outstanding academic achievement in 2002
- Awarded a Certificate of Academic Achievement by Hilbert College in 2002
- Former President of Psychology Club 2000-2002
- Given the Excellence Award for outstanding student contribution in 2002
- Received Participation Recognition Award in Psychology Club in 2002

### 2006-Present | Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services- Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor Certification (CASAC) Obtained

References available upon request