



# 2023 UTAH GANG CONFERENCE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2023

METRO GANG UNIT

CHOOSE GANG FREE

RESIDENTS AGAINST GRAFFITI

## 7:30-8:00 Registration

## 8:00-8:30 Great Hall (Main Level)

Welcome — *Lieutenant Mike Schoenfeld*

Flag Ceremony — *Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard*

National Anthem — *Officer Chris Ruiz, Pleasant Grove Police Department*

Sheriff's Remarks — *Sheriff Rosie Rivera*

## 8:30-10:00 Workshops

### Main Level

204-205 SAC/SAW Evolution — *Detective Deon Walser/Detective Casey Clawson*

### Plaza Level (Downstairs)

101-102 OMG's 101 — *Detective Justin "Morty" Mortenson, Utah County Sheriff's Office*

103-104 Jail Corrections Update — *Detective Tyler Limb/Detective Shane Conrad*

Suites C-E Gangs 101 — *Detective Dave Jenson/Detective Z Fallows* **Continued at 10:15**

## 10:15-11:45 Workshops

### Main Level

204-205 Northern Region Gang Update Ogden and Davis County — *Detective Ernesto Juarez, Davis County Sheriff's Office*

### Plaza Level (Downstairs)

101-102 Q & A with a Reformed Gang Member — *Alecia Fotu*

103-104 UDC Security Threat Group Update — *Lieutenant James Demkov/Sergeant Mike Hart/Officer Tommy Carmody, Utah Department of Corrections*

Suites C-E Gangs 101 — *Detective Dave Jenson/Detective Z Fallows*

## 12:00-1:15 Great Hall (Main Level) — Lunch

## 1:15-2:45 Workshops

### Main Level

204-205 Girls & Gangs - A look at female juveniles and the roles they play in the gang world — *Gang Prevention Advocate Eshte Green*

### Plaza Level (Downstairs)

101-102 Gangs 101 — *Detective Dave Jenson/Detective Z Fallows* **Continued at 3:00**

103-104 Human Trafficking & Gangs, does it exist? — *Special Agent Lorenzo "Snow" Leuluai, Utah Attorney General's Office* **Continued at 3:00**

Suites C-E Reefer Madness: A study in the violence with Marijuana and the growing Utah Industry — *Detective Jared Stillion/Patient Advocate Desiree Hennessy/Executive Director Alyssa Smailes, Utah Cannabis Association/Head of Legal, Compliance & Government Affairs for WholesomeCo J.D. Lauritzen/Chief Scientific Officer at Zion Blake Smith* **Continued at 3:00**

## 3:00-4:30 Workshops

### Main Level

204-205 The Intersection of Gang Culture and Mental Health — *Gang Prevention Advocate Summer Elton, CSW, MSW*

### Plaza Level (Downstairs)

101-102 Gangs 101 — *Detective Dave Jenson/Detective Z Fallows*

103-104 Human Trafficking & Gangs, does it exist? — *Special Agent Lorenzo "Snow" Leuluai, Utah Attorney General's Office-*

Suites C-E Reefer Madness: A study in the violence with Marijuana and the growing Utah Industry — *Detective Jared Stillion/Patient Advocate Desiree Hennessy/Executive Director Alyssa Smailes, Utah Cannabis Association/Head of Legal, Compliance & Government Affairs for WholesomeCo J.D. Lauritzen/Chief Scientific Officer at Zion Blake Smith*



# 2023 UTAH GANG CONFERENCE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2023

METRO GANG UNIT  
CHOOSE GANG FREE  
RESIDENTS AGAINST GRAFFITI

## 8:30-10:00 Workshops

### Main Level

204-205 **Federal Firearms Prosecutions** — *Assistant United States Attorney Sirena Wissler*

### Plaza Level (Downstairs)

101-102 **Where U From?!** — *Detective Cody Pender/Gang Prevention Coordinator Bree Eller/  
Gang Prevention Coordinator Erica Martinez*

103-104 **Gang Trends** — *Detective Ben Sullivan* **Continued at 10:15**

Suites C-E **Salt Lake Regional Update** — *Detective Jerry Valdez/Detective Kevin Worwood* **Continued at 10:15**

## 10:15-11:45 Workshops

### Main Level

204-205 **Walking in their shoes: Understanding Gang Involved Youth** — *Gang Prevention Advocate Shay Thompson/  
Gang Prevention Advocate Lani Rodrigues*

### Plaza Level (Downstairs)

101-102 **Juvenile Justice - Perspectives from the prosecution and defense** — *Senior Deputy District Attorney Adrianna Davis/  
Executive Director Pamela Vickrey, Utah Juvenile Defender Attorneys*

103-104 **Gang Trends Trends** — *Detective Ben Sullivan*

Suites C-E **Salt Lake Regional Update** — *Detective Jerry Valdez/Detective Kevin Worwood*

## 12:00-1:15 Great Hall (Main Level) — Lunch

Awards

Prize Drawings for UGIA

## 1:15-2:45 Workshops

### Main Level

204-205 **Human Trafficking & Gangs, does it exist?** — *Special Agent Lorenzo "Snow" Leuluai, Utah Attorney General's Office*  
**Continued at 3:00**

### Plaza Level (Downstairs)

101-102 **Reefer Madness: A study in the violence with Marijuana and the growing Utah Industry** — *Detective Jared Stillion/  
Patient Advocate Desiree Hennessy/Executive Director Alyssa Smailes, Utah Cannabis Association/Head of Legal,  
Compliance & Government Affairs for WholesomeCo J.D. Lauritzen/Chief Scientific Officer at Zion Blake Smith*  
**Continued at 3:00**

103-104 **Salt Lake Regional Update** — *Detective Jerry Valdez/Detective Kevin Worwood/Detective Ben Sullivan* **Continued at 3:00**

Suites C-E **SKIP – Supporting Kids with Incarcerated Parents** — *Gayle Threet* **Continued at 3:00**

## 3:00-4:30 Workshops

### Main Level

204-205 **Human Trafficking & Gangs, does it exist?** — *Special Agent Lorenzo "Snow" Leuluai, Utah Attorney General's Office*

### Plaza Level (Downstairs)

101-102 **Reefer Madness: A study in the violence with Marijuana and the growing Utah Industry** — *Detective Jared Stillion/  
Patient Advocate Desiree Hennessy/Executive Director Alyssa Smailes, Utah Cannabis Association/Head of Legal,  
Compliance & Government Affairs for WholesomeCo J.D. Lauritzen/Chief Scientific Officer at Zion Blake Smith*

103-104 **Salt Lake Regional Update** — *Detective Jerry Valdez/Detective Kevin Worwood/Detective Ben Sullivan*

Suites C-E **SKIP – Supporting Kids with Incarcerated Parents** — *Gayle Threet*

***Breakfast, Breaks, and Vendors will be in the Plaza Ballroom (Downstairs)***

***To request a certificate, please send an e-mail to: [cshiner@updsl.org](mailto:cshiner@updsl.org)***

## 2023 Utah Gang Conference Program Guide

### CLASS DESCRIPTIONS:

**Federal Firearms Prosecutions** — This class will provide an overview of Federal law as it relates to the prosecution of firearms offenses and violent crimes. Specific topics will include categories of prohibited persons, Career Offenders and Armed Career Criminals, RICO, and the capabilities of NIBIN in solving and prosecuting violent crime. *Presenter: Assistant United States Attorney Sirena Wissler*

**Gangs 101** — This course will provide an understanding of the multiple gangs in Utah and some of the history of those gangs. It will discuss some of the Gang Basics in order to give people an overview and understanding of current trends happening in Utah. This class will help people know things to help identify and recognize gang indicators for the various gangs in Utah. This course will also discuss how gangs are utilizing the various forms of social media to further their gang activity. This course will also include information on graffiti and gang prevention advocacy. *Presenters: Detective Dave Jenson/Detective Z Fallows, Metro Gang Unit*

**Gangs & Girls – A look at female juveniles and the roles they play in the gang world** — Girls have been involved in the gang lifestyle all throughout history, but their activity and their involvement is not often focused on. This class will be providing an overview of girls and the roles they play, specifically in the areas of dating, crime, and social media, as well as look at some of the reasons behind why girls get involved, and how we are seeing this play out in our streets and our schools. *Presenter: Gang Prevention Advocate Eshte Green*

**Gang Trends** — Gang Trends will cover the latest local and national gang trends. Some of these trends include social media, hip hop influence, marijuana violence, and new structuring of some gangs. *Presenter: Detective Ben Sullivan, Metro Gang Unit*

**Human Trafficking & Gangs, does it exist?** — This course explores the current trends, identifiers, and dynamics of street gang with an emphasis into human trafficking. Understanding and identifying gang culture and human trafficking trends requires investigators from local law enforcement throughout the State of Utah to work together and share information. The intent of this course is to prepare officers, administration, etc in both large and small agencies to properly identify and interdict gang/human trafficking activity in their respective jurisdictions, collect and manage their gang intelligence, human trafficking intelligence and communicate this information with neighboring jurisdictions, correctional facilities, & community liaisons. Lastly, the most important task as an investigator is assisting Victims of Human Trafficking, in preparation for court. The instructors will provide details & guidance into local/state programs, structured for Victims of Human Trafficking. *Presenter: Special Agent Lorenzo “Snow” Leuluai, Utah Attorney General’s Office*

**Jail Corrections Update** — This class is an update to current topics and trends we are seeing in our facility. We will address the rise in our blood population, Sureno population update, and

current narcotic trafficking methods. *Presenters: Detective Tyler Limb/Detective Shane Conrad, Metro Gang Unit*

**Juvenile Justice** — Perspectives from the prosecution and defense. *Presenters: Senior Deputy District Attorney Adrianna Davis, Salt Lake County District Attorney's Office/Executive Director Pamela Vickrey, Utah Juvenile Defender Attorneys*

**OMG's 101** — An introduction to Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs in Utah. *Presenter: Detective Justin "Morty" Mortensen, Utah County Sheriff's Office*

**Northern Region Gang Update Ogden and Davis County** — This class will provide an update on recent trends and gang activity in the Weber and Davis County areas to include information on current area gang leadership and cases of note. *Presenter: Detective Ernesto Juarez, Davis County Sheriff's Office*

**Q&A with a Reformed Gang Member** — This presenter will tell what factors enticed them to enter the gang lifestyle and what events prompted them to want to move away from gangs and criminal activity, to pursue life as a contributing citizen. *Presenter: Alecia Fotu*

**Reefer Madness: A study in the violence with Marijuana and the growing Utah Industry** — Reefer Madness is a study into the violence associated with Marijuana distribution and use. This class is a look into the history of Marijuana, the legalization, the industry surrounding marijuana, the growing industry in Utah, and multiple case studies involving the use and illegal sales of marijuana leading to violence on the streets. *Presenters: Detective Jared Stillion, Metro Gang Unit/Desiree Hennessy/Alyssa Smailes/JD Lauritzen/Chief Scientific Officer at Zion Blake Smith*

**SAC/SAW Evolution** — Presentation will include past and current status of SAC/SAW. How the two gangs have evolved over time, including membership numbers, organizational structure. Prison politics of the two groups, Rank structure and case studies. *Presenters: Detective Deon Walser/Detective Casey Clawson, Metro Gang Unit*

**Salt Lake Regional Update** — This workshop will provide an in-depth look into Utah's most active and violent gangs. We will examine local gang structure, members, and gang rivalries. This class is designed for all those who deal with gang members (law enforcement, educators, social workers, etc.). The class will also show the impact that gang violence is having on the Salt Lake Community and will reference recent cases. *Presenters: Detective Jerry Valdez/Detective Kevin Worwood/Detective Ben Sullivan, Metro Gang Unit*

**SKIP – Supporting Kids with Incarcerated Parents** — Children who have parents that have been incarcerated in jail or prison carry unique traumas and experiences. What this population often faces day by day is the emotional roller coaster of fear, shame, and isolation that can happen when parents are incarcerated and then released. Techniques will be given to reach students living with this type of enduring trauma. These techniques can be used in elementary, middle and high school settings, as well as detention centers and treatment facilities.

The training will include: The cycle of incarceration/re-offense/multiple incarcerations of parents; emotional well-being of children related to enduring trauma, coping strategies, criminal thinking, attachments, isolation; and how to counsel with these students to be a self-advocate while living with the impacts of parent incarcerations. Survivor empowerment is the foundation of resiliency for this population. *Presenter: Gayle Threet*

**The Intersection of Gang Culture and Mental Health** — This class is meant to provide information from a clinical lens on topics of mental health related to gang culture. The session will cover intersecting issues of gang membership, community issues, and trauma exposure with differential diagnoses to support awareness and best practices in this population. We will also look at the long-term behavioral and health consequences associated with gang-membership and focus on understanding the role that basic needs has in this community. Risk factors, protective factors, trauma responses, and coping mechanisms will also be discussed in relation to this theme. Attendees can expect to learn how to actively make an informed difference in others with an inspired mindset of awareness for positive change. *Presenter: Gang Prevention Advocate Summer Elton, CSW, MSW, Metro Gang Unit*

**UDC Security Threat Group Update** — Brief overview of some of the Security Threat Groups within UDC as well as the current trends we are seeing. Options within UDC for Offenders who wish to disassociate themselves from their Security Threat Group. *Presenters: Lieutenant James Demkov, Sergeant Mike Hart, Officer Tommy Carmody, Utah Department of Corrections*

**Walking in their shoes: Understanding Gang Involved Youth** — The focus of this presentation is to help participants understand the perspective of gang involved youth and how to better relate to them by building positive relationships. In the class we hope to help you have a better understanding of why kids join gangs by going in depth on various topics. By taking this class you will gain the skills that will help you build a healthy rapport & understanding of gang involved youth, while holding them accountable for their behaviors. Gang mentality and ideation are growing among our youth, and our goal is to help shed light to the causes of this growing trend. We hope after attending this class/ workshop we can help teachers, administration, and Law Enforcement Officers to gain a new perspective on gang involved youth and how to work more effectively with them. *Presenters: Gang Prevention Advocate Shay Thompson/ Gang Prevention Advocate Lani Rodrigues, Metro Gang Unit*

**Where U From?!** — Bringing awareness to the rise in juvenile gang violence. Offering different perspectives and processes from law enforcement and prevention/intervention specialists. Providing suggestions to help adults who interact with at risk and gang involved youth to have successful and positive interactions. A brief timeline of a juvenile gang members journey through the system. *Presenters: Detective Cody Pender/Gang Prevention Coordinator Bree Eller/Gang Prevention Advocate Erica Martinez, Metro Gang Unit*

### **PRESENTER BIOS:**

**CARMODY, Tommy** — Tommy Carmody is an Officer with the Utah Department of Corrections. He began his career at the Central Utah Correctional Facility in 2005 and is currently

the STG Officer for CUCF. His previous assignments include General Population, Substance Abuse Treatment, Intake and Direct Supervision.

**CLAWSON, Casey** — Agent Casey Clawson is a probation/parole agent with the Utah Department of Corrections, Adult Probation and Parole with over six years of law enforcement experience. Agent Clawson began his law enforcement career as a Deputy Sheriff at the Salt Lake County Adult Detention Center. Agent Clawson has been assigned as a Task Force Officer with the Salt Lake Metro Gang Unit since April 2021.

**CONRAD, Shane** — He started career with the Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office in 2001 – 2007. He worked in Minimum, Medium, Maximum Security Housing units, Clothing and Control. He worked at Salt Lake City Police Department from 2007 -2012. He was assigned to patrol East and West Divisions, attended 2010 SWAT school, and worked undercover as a Vice Detective. He returned to the Jail in 2017. He is a member of the Joint Security Threat Intelligence Committee (JSTIC) since 2017, Processing, Background Investigator, Video Court and Metro Gang Unit since November 2022.

**DAVIS, Adrianna** — Senior Deputy District Attorney Adrianna Davis began her career at the Salt Lake City Prosecutor's Office in 2009 and then joined the Salt Lake County District Attorney Office in 2012, where she supervises the Juvenile Team. When she isn't helping the police chase down bad guys, she is chasing around her husband, two daughters and two dogs - preferably on horseback.

**DEMKOV, James** — James Demkov is a Lieutenant with the Utah Department of Corrections. He began his career at the Utah State Prison in 2014 and is currently the STG Coordinator for USP Draper. He has worked as a Correctional Officer and Sergeant. His previous assignments include Restrictive Housing, Maximum Security and General Population.

**ELLER, Bree** — Bree Eller has been working with at risk youth over the last 7 years. She began her career working at ARTEC (Adolescent Residential Treatment & Education Center) as a head counselor for youth struggling with drug, alcohol, and mental illnesses. Providing them with DBT groups and self-esteem groups. After the program closed Bree joined the Choose Gang Free Team. She began her career teaching Choose Gang Free's 5<sup>th</sup> grade prevention program and mentoring students 1 on 1 in Murray School District. In 2018 Bree moved into the Program Coordinator role where she was able to use her skills and knowledge to help grow the program, coordinating events, and holiday meal drives with her team. As a Program Coordinator Bree is servicing youth through Juvenile Justice Services, Probation, DCFS, and taking the overflow of referrals from our school districts.

**ELTON, Summer, CSW, MSW** — Summer recently graduated with her Master of Social Work degree May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023 along with a Certificate in Trauma Practice from Simmons University in Boston. She also received her Bachelor of Science degree in Justice Studies from Westminster College in 2018. Summer is highly passionate about her education and clinical experience. Her own life journey has led her into the social work field, working in many helping professions from the start of her career which include the SLCO Jail, Volunteers of America, Criminal Justice Services, and now in Choose Gang Free. She has been employed with Choose Gang Free since

2019 and currently works in the Canyons School District providing gang intervention and prevention services for youth at Hillcrest High School. Summer also works at Aspire Counseling, providing individual, family, and couples therapy for diverse populations. She enjoys working with many populations, but youth and trauma work is her passion. She is known for her valuable insight and the ability to empower people through their own life challenges, finding fulfillment working within challenging and complex individual, family, and community dynamics. She has a great deal of familiarity working in her local communities with people that have experienced trauma and continues to develop her knowledge and work in this area. She truly enjoys her profession and meeting clients where they are at, knowing that everyone has a story.

**FALLOWS, Z** — Z Fallows was born in Serbia and moved to the US when she was 15, a freshmen at West High School. This is where her interest and passion in working gangs and law enforcement developed.

Z began her law enforcement career almost 10 years ago with the Utah Highway Patrol - Salt Lake County. Z transferred to SBI (State Bureau of Investigations in 2016, and worked on the Narcotics Unit until 2022. Z is currently assigned full time to the Metro Gang Unit.

**GREEN, Eshte** — Eshte has been a part of the Choose Gang Free team since July of 2022, and has been working with at risk youth and young adults since 2017. She started working with gang involved youth in a residential setting and continued to support and mentor high-risk teens dealing with addiction, homelessness, mental health, trauma, and sex trafficking. Throughout her years as a case manager, she started to recognize a huge gap in the resources available for gang involved youth, and a lack of education and support for their specific challenges and needs. Eshte started focusing more on gang intervention and prevention with youth in juvenile detention facilities and moved to Utah specifically for the CGF program. Her focus is on getting to know each youth individually, developing personalized support plans for them, and providing training for other professionals looking to better understand and advocate for these youth.

**HART, Mike** — Mike Hart is a Sergeant with the Utah Department of Corrections. He began his career at the Utah State Prison in 2000 and is currently the STG Coordinator for CUCF and a member of the Drug Interdiction team. He has worked as a Correctional Officer and Sergeant. His previous assignments include General Population, Maximum Security and Outside Enforcement.

**JENSON, Dave** — Detective Jenson has been in Law Enforcement for over 22 years and has been part of State and Federal investigative units. He is currently on the executive board of UGIA. He has been part of several long-term gang investigations. This course will provide an understanding of the multiple gangs in Utah and some of the history of those gangs. It will discuss some of the Gang Basics in order to give people an overview and understanding of current trends happening in Utah. This class will help people know things to help identify and recognize gang indicators for the various gangs in Utah.

**JUAREZ, Ernesto** — Detective Juarez has been a law enforcement officer since 2016 where he started his career at the Ogden Police Department as a patrol officer. In 2017 Detective Juarez was assigned to the Ogden Police Crime Reduction Unit (CRU), a proactive unit specializing in reducing violent crime, gang suppression, and targeting problem areas. In 2019, Detective Juarez

was then transferred to the Ogden Metro Gang Task Force where he worked gang investigations, large scale drug trafficking organizations involving gang and cartel members, Title 3 investigations, and undercover operations. In 2023, Detective Juarez was hired by the Davis County Sheriff's Office and assigned to the investigation division. Detective Juarez is still currently involved in assisting with gang, narcotics, and firearm trafficking cases with agencies throughout the Wasatch Front. Detective Juarez was born and raised in Los Angeles, CA in gang infested neighborhoods. This experience has helped Detective Juarez greatly in his role as an investigator.

**LAURITZEN, J.D.** — J. D. Lauritzen, aka The Leafy Lawyer, is the Head of Legal, Compliance & Government Affairs for WholesomeCo, Inc., one of Utah's vertically integrated medical cannabis companies. Prior to joining WholesomeCo, J. D. worked in private practice for Christensen & Jensen, P.C., where he focused on, among other things, servicing Utah's burgeoning cannabis industry and its patients. Before that, he worked for a small boutique law firm that specialized in civil rights, personal injury, medical malpractice, and products liability. J. D. graduated with distinction from the University of Nebraska College of Law. He is a co-founder and current co-chair of Utah's cannabis law section within the Utah State Bar. J. D. was also recently confirmed as the medical cannabis pharmacy owner/operator representative on the newly formed Medical Cannabis Policy Advisory Board.

**LEULUAI, Lorenzo “Snow”** — Special Agent Snow Leuluai has been with the Attorney General's Office since October 2020. Prior to the AG's office, Snow was with the Salt Lake City Police Department for 17 years. For his first three years, he worked as a Patrol Officer and a Field Training Officer. He then, transferred to the Fusion Bike Squad where they dealt with Community Oriented issues stemming from Gang Graffiti to mobile drug dealers. During a short stint with the Fusion Bike Squad, Snow was transferred to the Salt Lake Area Metro Gang Unit. Serving 2 years in Metro Gangs, Snow again was transferred once more to the FBI Safe Streets Gang Task Force and served there for over 10 years. With the AG's office, Snow is currently assigned to the S.E.C.U.R.E. Strike Force, as their primary focus is into Human Trafficking.

Snow's expertise comes from life experiences, family gang ties, and knowledge gained from street survival. Being raised in Santa Ana, California, Snow's family moved to Utah to get away from the gang violence occurring in the Sureno neighborhood his family was residing in.

Snow has taught at various gang conferences and shared gang intelligence with various State and Federal agencies throughout the Country. The topics presented, ranges from Polynesian Gangs, advance Gang 102, gangster Music, Nortenos , NF/La Eme, Human Trafficking and other Gang related topics. Snow has also been involved with various nonprofit organization and State funded organizations as a liaison for Law Enforcement specifically dealing with Gang related issues. Snow is also a court certified gang expert.

Snow's passion for Gangs and “OUR” community reflects in his work with State/Local agencies, Federal partners, as well as partnerships with various NGO's.

**LIMB, Tyler** — Tyler Limb is a Salt Lake County Sheriff's Deputy. He is currently assigned to the Salt Lake Area Gang Project (Metro Gang Unit). Tyler has been in law enforcement since May



2005, starting his career in corrections at the Utah State Prison. While employed at the prison, he was fortunate to have worked in many areas including housing, security, and programs units. He ran a work program called Reading for the Blind. Working hand in hand with the Utah State Library for the Blind and Seeing impaired he ran a work crew of 25 inmates to read books and copy them in to digital format for distribution through the Library to the entire Rocky Mountain Region. He moved to the Salt Lake County Jail in 2016. While there, Tyler worked in Security and Housing where he was able to continue teaching classes to cadets starting their career. Tyler was then assigned to the position Jail Security Threat Information/Threat Officer (STIO) which also allowed him and his counterpart to be assigned to the Metro Gang Unit. The assignment requires them to work on investigating all security threats and gang issues in the jail, assisting outside agencies in their investigations, and providing county and UPD officers with intelligence information, either coming into or going out of the jail.

**MARTINEZ, Erica** —Erica Martinez has been working for the Choose Gang Free program since 2017. Prior to Choose Gang Free, Erica worked with at-risk youth in a residential setting and at West High School as a para-professional. She started her career with Choose Gang Free as an advocate in the schools; Primarily working with middle & high school at-risk youth. Erica became a program coordinator for the program about 3 years ago where she has been serving youth placed in juvenile justice services, on probation, as well as other youth within Salt Lake County. Erica continues to expand her skills and training to help Choose Gang Free grow by servicing youth, coordinating events, summer programs, and assisting with supervision duties within the program.

**MORTENSEN, Justin “Morty”** — Detective Mortensen has been with the Utah County Sheriff’s Office for 25+ years. In that time, he worked in Corrections in Housing, Booking, Work Release, GPS and as a member of the Detention Response Team and the Gang Intelligence Team. He was a Firearms Instructor for 20+ years. He has spent the 9 years with in the Enforcement Division working in Eagle Mountain and County Patrol. The last 4 ½ years he has been assigned to the Special Enforcement Team and the Major Crimes Task Force specializing in Narcotics Enforcement, Fugitive Apprehension and Gang Investigations. Morty has an extensive knowledge of Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs and has investigated multiple clubs/gangs and dismantled an Outlaw Club operating in Utah and Wyoming.

Morty is a Board Member of the Utah Gang Investigators Association, Utah Narcotics Officer’s Association and the California Narcotics Officers Association. Additionally, Morty is a member of IOMGIA and the Tri State Associations, both of which specialize in Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs investigations and intelligence sharing.

Morty as given multiple presentations on Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs to Local, State, and International Law Enforcement and Prosecution groups.

**PENDER, Cody** — Cody Pender started his law enforcement career at the Salt Lake County Adult Detention Center in 2010 where he worked in maximum security and MCIRT. During his time at ADC he was a JSTIC representative and worked on identifying and gathering gang intelligence. In 2013 Cody hired on with Unified Police Department and was assigned to the Kearns/Magna precinct. He participated with the OG (gang) unit for the duration of his time in Kearns/Magna. Cody worked briefly in Taylorsville before being selected for the Metro Gang Unit in 2016. He is

currently assigned to the Metro Gang Unit suppression unit. He currently focuses on active street gangs to include Florencia.

**RODRIGUES, Lani** — Lani started working for the Choose Gang Free program in 2018. She has worked in numerous schools, providing gang prevention & intervention services to middle school and high school aged youth. Lani currently has served 4 school years in Canyons School District. Prior to Choose Gang Free, Lani worked as a para-professional at West High school for 4 years. There, is when Lani found her passion for working with youth and helping change lives. During her time at Choose Gang Free, Lani has not only serviced her schools and at-risk youth, but she has also gained the knowledge and expanded her skills in understanding gang involved youth. Lani serves Choose Gang Free in a whole, by assisting with events, providing training, and partnering with outside agencies to provide her youth with extracurricular activities.

**SMAILES, Alyssa** — Alyssa Smailes serves as the Executive Director for the Utah Cannabis Association, where she champions advocacy and program awareness initiatives related to the responsible use and regulation of cannabis. With a deep passion for education, public health, and policy reform, Alyssa works to create an environment in Utah where cannabis can be understood, accessed, and utilized responsibly and safely by those who need it.

**SMITH, Blake** — Blake Smith is one of the nation's leading biochemists focused on the cultivation, processing and productizing of cannabis and cannabis medicines. As the Chief Scientific Officer at Zion, Blake has moved to the forefront of the industry in knowledge of extraction techniques, isolation of specific cannabinoids and their various therapeutic purposes. As a father of a daughter with a predilection for seizures, he is an active advocate for the healing medical benefits of cannabis and is constantly researching for the best prescriptive uses of the plant. In his free time, Blake enjoys spending time with his family and playing board games.

**STILLION, Jared** — Jared Stillion started his law enforcement career in 2007 with the Border Patrol assigned to the Tucson Sector. He moved to Utah later that year and Joined the Salt Lake County Sheriff's department in 2008 to 2012. He worked as a corrections officer in Housing and M/CIRT. In 2010 he joined the Unified Police Department as a reserve officer assigned to Magna and Kearns. In 2012 he became a full time police officer with Unified Police. He was assigned to Millcreek Patrol and served as a Detective in the Crash Analysis and Reconstruction unit. In 2016 he went to the Violent Crimes Unit investigating Robbery and Homicide. There he was an FBI Task Force Officer in the violent crimes task force. In 2020 he joined the Metro Gang Unit and became an ATF Task Force Officer.

**SULLIVAN, Ben** — Instructor Ben Sullivan has been a law enforcement officer for over 14 years. His background includes narcotics, gangs, street crimes, patrol, SWAT, K-9, among many other specialty assignments. Currently Ben is serving as a detective on the Salt Lake County Gang Task Force and a task force officer with Homeland Security. Ben has testified as an expert witness in Gang trends, narcotics, and street crimes. Ben also travels the US as instructor of his class Gang, Narcotics, and Street Crimes in a New Era.

**THOMPSON, Shay** — Shay is a Gang Prevention Advocate with the Choose Gang Free Program. Shay has her teaching degree in secondary education with an emphasis in science. Shay has worked

for Choose Gang Free since June 2018. She worked with at-risk youth for five years at Hunter High School prior to working at Choose Gang Free. She gained a love for helping the community and helping youth focus on positive goals and their futures. Shay has been working in Granite School District for the last 4 years and has made an impact on her schools and youth. She has built positive relationships with adults as well as youth and their families.

**THREET, Gayle** — Gayle has coordinated trainings for counselors, teachers and administrators in multiple districts statewide who work with elementary and secondary students who have incarcerated parents (S.K.I.P. – Supporting Kids with Incarcerated Parents). She has facilitated victim empathy and life skills groups at the Utah State Prison for incarcerated women and men. She developed the Pathfinders’ program for gang-involved students. She was a crisis responder for 25 years in Jordan School District (30-50 crisis calls a year) and a counselor at West Hills Middle School and Copper Mountain Middle School.

She is a co-author of *Techniques for Tough Times*, curriculum for teachers and counselors. She has trained counselors and teachers nationally how to build relationships with students for mental well-being and academic success.

She had the opportunity to be the Restorative Practices Specialist for Utah State Board of Education. She continues to train and consult with districts regarding Restorative Practices, SKIP, Suicide Prevention, and Group and Individual Counseling Techniques. Gayle was also a counselor at Diamond Ridge Alternative High School in Canyons District.

She believes strongly that counselors, teachers and administrators make life-changing differences with students when relationships can be built. Gayle is certified in Conflict Resolution by the University of Utah’s Conflict Resolution Program, a trainer for the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) and has received her certification as a Trauma-Informed Practitioner in Education.

**VALDEZ, Jerry** — Detective Jerry Valdez has been in law enforcement since December 2008, starting his career in corrections at the Salt Lake County Jail. While employed at the jail, he had the opportunity to work in many areas of the jail, including the minimum- and maximum-security housing units, programs where he was very involved in teaching Life Skills class. Valdez was then assigned to Jail Security Threat Information/Threat Officer (STIO) which also allowed him and his counterpart to be assigned to the Metro Gang Unit. In 2016 Valdez transitioned to the Unified Police Department as a law enforcement officer and spent his first year serving the communities of Holladay and Taylorsville as a patrol officer before rejoining the Metro Gang Unit as a detective. Jerry is considered a court expert on street gang issues due to his experience conducting numerous complex investigations that utilize a variety of tools including Title III wires, search warrants for both digital and physical evidence, surveillance, and confidential informants. He is POST-certified to instruct officers across Utah on street gangs, narcotics, and security issues in correctional facilities. Valdez is also a Task Force Officer with the US Marshal Service (VFAST) and Vice President of the Utah Gang Investigators Association.

**VICKREY, Pamela** — Pamela Vickrey serves as the Executive Director of the Utah Juvenile Defender Attorneys. Pamela has been instrumental in several sweeping reforms in Utah, including

serving on the committee that developed Utah's juvenile competency statute, legislation that requires automatic appointment of counsel in all delinquency cases from the first hearing through termination of court jurisdiction, shackling reform, eliminating juvenile life without parole, modifications to transfer laws, extension of court jurisdiction, raising the age, and an omnibus juvenile justice reform. As a certified J-TIP (Juvenile Training Immersion Program) trainer in Utah, Ms. Vickrey attends, participates in, and provides specialized training to juvenile defense attorneys in the state and around the country.

**WALSER, Deon** — Approximately 10 years in LE, assigned to the Metro Gang Unit since 2017. Agent with Adult Probation and Parole dealing primarily with prison gangs who come to the streets on parole.

**WISSELER, Sirena** — Sirena Miller Wissler is an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Utah and is currently assigned as the Deputy Chief of the Organized Crime Section. Sirena joined the District of Utah in July 2022 following an 18-year career in the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Missouri, where she served in a number of capacities. Her last assignment prior to her departure was Civil Rights Coordinator. In that role, she was responsible for leading the office's investigations of civil rights violations and hate crimes. From 2004 through 2020, she was assigned to the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force and served as its Deputy Chief from 2019-2020. Between 1996 and 2003, Sirena was a Deputy District Attorney for Salt Lake County, Utah. Her first assignment was civil litigation, where, among other things, she defended police officers accused of civil rights violations including excessive force. Her last three years in Salt Lake City were spent as member of the Salt Lake District Attorney's Office Organized Gang Prosecution Unit.

As an AUSA in Missouri beginning in 2004, Sirena primarily focused on large-scale narcotics investigations, many of which involved complex drug trafficking organizations and Title III wiretaps. Between 2009 and 2012, she coordinated the joint ATF/FBI investigation of the Wheels of Soul, a 400-plus member Outlaw Motorcycle Gang with chapters in more than 20 states. The investigation resulted in the prosecution of 24 members on RICO Conspiracy charges and culminated in a 35 day trial involving 8 defendants. The government's case included more than 60 witnesses and over 500 exhibits and resulted in guilty verdicts on offenses ranging from Racketeering Conspiracy to Violent Crime in Aid of Racketeering – Murder. In 2013, the International Outlaw Motorcycle Gang Investigators' Association awarded the Wheels of Soul prosecution the Robert Faulkner Memorial Award for Outstanding Prosecution. Beginning in 2016, Sirena served as the office's Opioid Coordinator, and her area of emphasis included the prosecution of cases resulted in "overdose" deaths. To date, she has investigated and/or prosecuted more than 40 such cases.

Sirena received a BA in European History from the University of Pennsylvania in 1992 and a JD from the West Virginia University School of Law in 1995. She has written or lectured on a variety of topics for the Utah Peace Officers' Standards and Training Academy, the Salt Lake Area Gang Project, the Utah Prosecutor's Association, the Missouri Narcotics Officers' Association, the Missouri Sheriffs' Association, the Missouri Police Chiefs' Association, the University of Virginia School of Law, the Washington University School of Law, the Saint Louis University School of Law, the Utah Narcotics Officers' Association, and others. She has served as an instructor for the

Department of Justice's National Advocacy Center, the Washington Attorney General's Office, and countless state and local law enforcement agencies on the subject of opioid intoxication deaths. She is admitted to practice in State and Federal Courts in Utah and Missouri, as well as the United States Courts of Appeals for the Eighth and Tenth Circuits.

**WORWOOD, Kevin** — Detective Worwood has been in Law Enforcement for 7 years with the Sandy Police department, where he has been in several different positions to include patrol, school resource officer, crime suppression unit, and most recently assigned to the Metro Gang Unit. He has been part of several long-term narcotics, gangs, and firearm investigations. He has written and assisted with multiple TIII wire cases into local street gangs and conducted several federal investigations as a TFO with the ATF.