

ANNUAL VAC SEMINAR
LOUISIANA DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION



***September 11-12, 2025
Baton Rouge, LA***

AGENDA
Subject to Change

Day 1 (Thursday, September 11)

8:00 – 4:00 REGISTRATION

8:30 -8:45 WELCOME

Ms. Leone Fitzgerald, 2024-2025 LDAA VAC Board Section President
Ms. Wanjennia Atkins, Administrative Director/Victim Services Coordinator
Louisiana District Attorneys Association, Baton Rouge, LA
Ms. Katie LeLeux, Victim Services Attorney
Louisiana District Attorneys Association, Baton Rouge, LA

8:45 – 9:50 SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Ms. Kris Anglin Barney
Mr. Justin Boardman

9:50 – 10:00 BREAK

10:00 – 11:00 LAYERS, THE EXPERIENCE ~ A SURVIVOR'S STORY

This deeply personal and powerful session explores the complex layers of trauma through the lens of lived experience. Shona Chavis, a survivor and trauma educator, shares her journey through childhood adversity, intimate partner violence, and the neurological and generational impact of trauma. Participants will gain insight into how trauma shapes behavior, memory, and responses to the justice system. Through storytelling and neuroscience, this presentation challenges attendees to see beyond the surface, offering a deeper understanding of survivor behavior, the biology of trauma, and the critical need for trauma-informed approaches in legal and law enforcement settings.

Ms. Shona Chavis, Trauma Educator
a voice Awakening (avA), Baton Rouge, LA

11:00 – 11:15 BREAK

**11:15 – 12:15 UNDERSTANDING BRADY ISSUES: TRANSPARENCY, JUSTICE, & THE
ROLE OF VACs**

This session will provide Victim Assistance Coordinators with a clear understanding of *Brady v. Maryland* and how legal disclosure obligations may intersect with their work. While VACs are not responsible for handling Brady material, they play a critical role in managing sensitive information and supporting victims ethically. This presentation will highlight practical considerations, confidentiality concerns, and best practices for maintaining integrity in the justice process.

Ms. W. Claire Howington, ADA Section President
Assistant District Attorney, 16th Judicial District, New Iberia, LA

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12:15 – 1:30

LUNCH (ON YOUR OWN)

1:30 – 3:00

2025 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Join us as we discuss the eventful 2025 Legislative Session. This session will update you on relevant changes in the law and give a preview of what is in store for next year.

Mr. Zachary T. Daniels, Executive Director

Louisiana District Attorneys Association, Baton Rouge, LA

Ms. Katie LeLeux, Victim Services Attorney

Louisiana District Attorneys Association, Baton Rouge, LA

3:00 – 3:15

BREAK

3:15 – 4:00

VAC BOARD GENERAL MEETING

Mr. Zachary T. Daniels, Executive Director

Louisiana District Attorneys Association, Baton Rouge, LA

Ms. Wanjennia Atkins, Administrative Director/Victim Services Coordinator

Louisiana District Attorneys Association, Baton Rouge, LA

Ms. Katie LeLeux, Victim Services Attorney

Louisiana District Attorneys Association, Baton Rouge, LA

4:00

ADJOURN

Day 2 (Friday, September 12)

8:00 – 11:00

REGISTRATION

8:30 – 9:30

PARDON & PAROLE BOARD

Mr. Francis Abbott, Executive Director

Louisiana Board of Pardons & Committee on Parole, Baton Rouge, LA

9:30 – 9:45

BREAK

9:45 – 10:45

PATHWAY TO CERTIFICATION: PREPARING, APPLYING, & THRIVING AS A CERTIFIED VAC

Ms. Danielle C. Kitchen, NACP Senior Program Manager

National Organization for Victim Advocacy

10:45 – 11:00

BREAK

11:00 – 12:00

RETIRING WITH PURPOSE: TRANSITIONING FROM A CAREER IN VICTIM ADOVOCACY TO A NEW CHAPTER

Mrs. Kristi Garcia Spinosa, Administrative Director & General Counsel

Parochial Employees' Retirement System of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, LA

ADJOURN – SAFE TRAVELS!