



*The Amara Legal Center envisions a society where our clients are free from stigma, violence, oppression, exploitation, and criminalization.*

## Trainings & Education Inform Target Groups

Amara provides trainings and participates in a number of educational forums to increase awareness about human trafficking and to provide trauma-informed information to key target groups. These trainings can help remove barriers to services for survivors and address the criminalization and re-victimization that often occurs for victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. Below are a few of the November and December trainings Amara staff participated in and hosted.



Amara's Legal Program Director Christine Greene presented at the Maryland Women of Color Network (MWOCN) 2021 Virtual Conference on November 19. The event was sponsored by MWOCN, with support from MCASA, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) Rape and Sexual Assault Prevention Program, and Bowie State University.

Christine's workshop entitled, "Trauma-Informed Holistic Legal Representation for Sex Trafficking Survivors," discussed the impact of systemic racism, implicit bias and stigma on our clients' experiences within the criminal legal system--and related barriers to securing housing, employment, education and other life-improving services. Over 100 attendees gained greater insight into how Amara's unique holistic, trauma-informed, culturally-humble approach serves to empower our clients, amplify their voices, strengthen families (traditional and non-traditional) and eliminate the multitude of legal and non-legal barriers that they face.

Christine also shared strategies to address the complex challenges that victims of sex trafficking face in a legal system that oftentimes criminalizes and re-victimizes our clients. She discussed how Amara's legal services and innovative partnerships with other trauma-informed, culturally-humble mental health professionals, housing law attorneys and community partners are successfully elevating our clients--and the community--in pursuit of racial justice and criminal justice reform.

**BEST PRACTICES:  
IMPLEMENTING A TRAUMA-  
INFORMED LEGAL ADVOCACY  
RESPONSE FOR HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS**

FRIDAY, DEC. 3RD 8:30AM-1:30PM  
LIVE AT EANES-PITTMAN PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING CENTER  
AND STREAMED LIVE

WITH PRESENTATIONS BY: **freedom424**

AMARA LEGAL CENTER

**RECOVERHOPE**  
FREEDOM • HOPE • BELONGING

**freekind**  
FREEDOM • HOPE • BELONGING

ERIN BARR, SENIOR COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY FOR THE CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS  
THE HONORABLE D. GREGORY CARR, CHESTERFIELD COUNTY JUVENILE & DOMESTIC RELATIONS DISTRICT COURT  
AMANDA DAVIS, SURVIVOR ADVOCATE AND VICE PRESIDENT OF SURVIVOR ENGAGEMENT, VCAHT

**REGISTER HERE**

Made possible through contributions of our gracious sponsors

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY | SCHOOL OF LAW

ST. LOUIS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. LOUIS COUNTY

Amara's Attorney & Policy Counsel Sidney McCoy, alongside colleagues at the Virginia Coalition Against Human Trafficking, Freedom 4/24, FreeKind, and Recover Hope, trained 30 participants on December 3 from Chesterfield County law enforcement, the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, and the Public Defender's Office.

Participants received practical insights into establishing rapport with the survivor witness or client and understanding survivor behavior in court. This includes asking effective initial interview questions; exploring and implementing special defenses in the criminal defense contexts; locating supportive resources for the survivor before, during and after the proceedings; and pursuing post trial relief. Attendees also heard from Survivor Advocate Amanda Davis about her experience in the criminal legal system and how those involved in the criminal legal system can be effective in identifying and responding to human trafficking.

**DECEMBER 2, 2021  
10:30am-11:30am**

AMARA LEGAL CENTER

**DC VACATUR TRAINING  
FOR PRO BONO ATTORNEYS**

**The training will cover:**

- Types of relief available under the TSRAA
- Eligibility criteria for vacatur and expungement
- Best practices for attorneys filing vacatur motions in DC.

Amara's Managing Attorney of Client Success & Intake Caroline Ackerman trained 18 DC-barred pro bono attorneys and representatives from legal aid organizations on DC's 2018 Trafficking Survivors Relief Amendment Act (TSRAA), which provides criminal record relief for certain offenses when the conduct was the direct result of an individual being a victim of trafficking. Attendees learned about the types of relief available under the TSRAA, eligibility criteria for vacatur and expungement, and best practices for attorneys filing vacatur motions in DC.

Attendees also received a copy of the *Vacatur of Convictions Toolkit*, produced by Amara and McGuireWoods LLP, for legal professionals.

## Board Member "Circle of Hope" Video Message

Help us amplify the voices of survivors, elevate the discussion, and break the injustice faced by survivors by becoming a "Circle of Hope" donor.

Your contribution will help Amara provide 100 survivors with free legal services and give them hope as they move forward in their journeys towards healing!



**Expanded Tax Benefits Help Individuals and Businesses Give to Charities!**

Did you know that the IRS now permits taxpayers to claim a limited deduction on their 2021 federal income tax returns for cash contributions they made to certain qualifying charitable organizations? Usually taxpayers who take the standard deduction cannot deduct their charitable contributions. Now, taxpayers, including married individuals filing separate returns, can claim a deduction of up to \$300 for cash contributions to qualifying charities during 2021. The maximum deduction is \$600 for married individuals filing joint returns.

Another great reason to donate to the Amara Legal Center before the end of year!

Donate Today

## Shop at AmazonSmile & Support Amara

The AmazonSmile logo features the word "amazon" in black and "smile" in white on an orange background. Below "amazon" is the Amazon smile arrow. Underneath "smile" is the tagline "You shop. Amazon gives." in a smaller font.

Do you shop on Amazon? If the answer is yes, it is easy to support the Amara Legal Center with each purchase!

A few minutes is all it takes to set up. If you type in the word "smile" before Amazon.com in your browser, you will be brought to the Amazon site, but on the fundraising side.

Click [here](#) to read about how you can designate the Amara Legal Center to receive funds from Amazon. Let your friends and family members know! It costs the purchaser nothing, but benefits Amara's clients who are in need of legal services.

## Federal Employees Can Donate to Amara



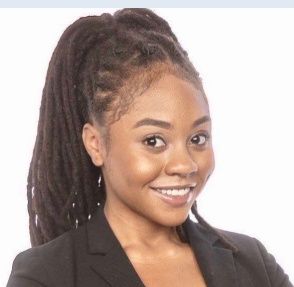
Amara Legal Center #43434

There's no better time to get involved as a Federal employee in supporting the Amara Legal Center! The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) enables Federal employees and retirees to select CFC participating charities with workplace giving!

This week's CFC theme is **human rights**. Now is the perfect time for current and former Federal employees to support Amara's work to provide free legal services to human trafficking survivors.

Together, we can change lives and give hope and justice to vulnerable populations through the CFC. Amara's designation number is: **43434**

## Welcome New Members to the Communications Team



Kyla Woods joins Amara as our new Communications Associate. In this role, she will lead our social media strategy, assist with "Know Your Rights" trainings, and develop community outreach initiatives.

Kyla is a graduate of the University of the District of Columbia, where she received her B.A. in Political Science in May 2021. Kyla began her civic engagement journey in 2016 as a youth



advocate with a nonprofit dedicated to serving human trafficking victims in DC.

Realizing the impact of stigma on receiving mental health services within communities of color, she later joined the DC Department of Behavioral Health and conducted community-based de-stigmatization forums to identify barriers to mental health services. In 2019, Kyla became a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project Fellow, leading the coordination of youth housing support services in Washington, DC for two years. After graduation, Kyla has remained committed to public policy reform and advocacy and is determined to empower survivors at the Amara Legal Center!

Daniela Romualdo Castro is Amara's new Communications Intern. In this capacity, Daniela is assisting with social media, translating marketing materials into Spanish, and helping with outreach strategies. She is a graduating senior at Trinity Washington University, where she is majoring in Communications with a minor in Women's Studies.

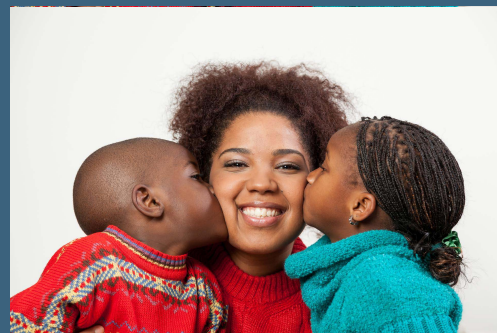


Throughout her university experience, she has gained background knowledge of intersectionality and has developed an intersectional lens to fight injustice by ending all forms of inequality and oppression including race, gender, class, sexuality, and ability.

As part of her course, she was part of creating and running a social media campaign about ending violence towards women. Her biggest task was creating graphics in Spanish and English of resources and information to assist those experiencing intimate partner violence and sexual abuse. Since then, she has been interested in advocating for underserved communities by using digital communication.

"I am so honored and delighted to intern with Amara. I am looking forward to learning more about the issues affecting trafficking survivors and how to provide appropriate and long-term support."

**HELP SURVIVORS  
ACCESS JUSTICE &  
PAVE A PATH  
TOWARDS HEALING!**



**Become A Monthly "Circle of Hope" Donor Today!**



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