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VICTIM & WITNESS
ASSISTANCE BOARD

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JENNIFER SALEM-RUSSO OF THE YOUTH TRAUMA CENTER RECEIVES VICTIM SERVICES “GERARD D. DOWNING LEADERSHIP AWARD”

BOSTON – During Victim Rights Month in April, Attorney General Maura Healey and the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) recognize individuals and agencies that have made significant contributions to victim rights and services.

Jennifer Salem-Russo received MOVA’s “Gerard D. Downing Leadership Award” for her nearly two decades of ensuring access to mental health supports for young victims of violence in the Fall River area.

For the past 17 years, Jennifer has served as the Clinical Coordinator at the Youth Trauma Program (YTP) at Saint Anne’s Hospital. Established in 1984, the YTP provides evaluation and counseling services to child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse, and other trauma including homicide, dating violence, bullying, or violence witnessed in the community.

Throughout her career, Jennifer has forged relationships with local schools, pediatricians, hospitals, Child Advocacy Centers, and the Department of Children and Families to increase access in systems identifying and working with child victims. Jennifer’s leadership in connecting local resources with YTP programming has created a more responsive service network that holistically serves the needs of victims and their families – ensuring their long-term safety and recovery.

Jennifer also works with state agency officials like the Massachusetts Children’s Alliance, the Governor’s Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, and others to promote this approach statewide. She trains mental health clinicians on varying evidence-based mental health models to ensure services are equitable and effective throughout the state.

“During Victim Rights Month we have an opportunity to recognize those who help some of the most vulnerable and innocent among us. These individuals provide critical services to victims, and we are proud of the work they do in our communities,” said Attorney General Maura Healey.

“The trauma caused by child sexual abuse can impact each aspect of a child’s life into adulthood,” said Liam Lowney, MOVA’s Executive Director. “Jennifer’s leadership of the YTP

program has ensured services are available to offer child survivors the opportunity to regain control and achieve long-term recovery. Her leadership in the field has and continues to make a difference in the lives of victims and we are thrilled to honor her with this award.”

For more information on the YTP at Saint Anne’s Hospital, please visit www.SaintAnnesHospital.org or call (888) 280-KIDS.

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