

Amanda Torres DSW, LSW  
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## Education

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### ***April 2011- August 2019***

Doctor of Social Work, Capella University – Graduation with distinction

### ***January 2008 – December 2010***

Master of Social Work, Specialization in public child welfare, Rutgers University

### ***September 2000 – December 2003***

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Georgian Court University

### ***September 1998- May 2000***

Associate of Liberal Arts, Ocean County College

## Professional Employment

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***September 2014 – Present: Supervising Family Service Specialist II***, Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency, Burlington East Local office, Lumberton:

- ***September 2014 – Present:*** Oversee staff in delivery of services to families requiring intervention from the Division, ensuring that proper policy has been followed. Lead staff in acquiring the skills needed to conduct day-to-day operations such as; completion of forms and paperwork, delivery of services, interacting with clients and community providers, conducting investigations, coordinating and facilitating family team meetings and assessing the safety and risk of children.
  - ***March 2020*** – Present position: Supervisor of intake unit
  - ***September 2014 – March 2020:*** Supervisor of permanency unit

***August 2020 – Current: Part-time Lecturer***, Rutgers University

- Part-time lecturer for the Master of Social Work Intensive Weekend Program
  - Courses Taught – Methods of Social Work Research 1 and Methods of Social Work Research II
- Course projects include focus groups and associated transcription activities and data analysis; survey preparation including a theoretical foundation and question preparation with survey administration; program evaluation group project to include the in-depth analysis of a specific social work program and an associated literature review and associated review of longitudinal data, various statistical exercises

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including t-test, reliability/validity, single system research designs, and various APA papers.

**October 2014 – Present: Job Fest Reviewer;** Department of Children and Families; Division of Child Protection and Permanency:

- Interview prospective employees for the role of Family Service Specialist trainee. Conduct structured panel interviews based on DCF hiring practices.

**September 2015 – Present: Qualitative Reviewer;** Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency:

- Assess system performance while identifying strengths and areas needing improvement.

**March 2006 – Present: Special Response Unit (SPRU);** Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency,

- (Counties; Ocean, Monmouth, Cape May, Atlantic, and Burlington) – Respond to calls of abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse after hours and on weekends. Assess risk of harm, and ensure the immediate safety of children, developing appropriate plans when necessary to divert crisis or mitigate any safety factors causing unsafe situations.

**April 2004 – September 2014: Family Service Specialist II,** Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency, Ocean North local office, Lakewood

- Investigated allegations of abuse, neglect and sexual abuse. Investigation responsibilities included assessing safety and risk to children and implementing specific resources for each family while partnering with community providers to ensure the stabilization of the family unit. Strong partnerships with medical facilities, law enforcement and the courts system, often providing court testimony as needed. The following is a breakdown of specific assignments within the agency

*April 2004 – April 2005; residential unit,*

*April 2005 – April 2008; intake unit*

*January 2008 – June 2008; pre-adoption unit*

*June 2008 – May 2009; permanency unit*

*May 2009 – September 2014; intake unit*

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## Clinical Experience

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**May 2009 – August 2010: Clinical internship**, Preferred Behavioral Health of New Jersey, IOTSS, Intensive Outpatient Treatment Support Services

- Provided short-term individual and group therapy, case management services to adults with various diagnoses, assist consumers with developing a wellness action recovery plan (WRAP), to manage symptoms and minimize the need for psychiatric hospitalization.

## Dissertation

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Torres, A. (2019). *Cross-systems collaboration between child welfare and substance abuse: An action research study*. Capella University, Minneapolis, MN.

## Notable Trainings

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### ***Introduction to Sand Play Training Series – March 2022***

- Extensive, hands-on experience in building a sand tray, facilitating the sand play process for others and participated in experiential exercises with multiple participants.
- Gained knowledge of the theoretical background of sand play therapy including Erikson's developmental tasks applied to sand play, basic Jungian concepts, and basic tenants of family sand play therapy.

### ***DCF Parent – Child Visitation Planning Tool – July 2021***

- Training to enhance visitation practices for children in out of home placement, including an overview of when to utilize the visitation tool which includes the visitation location, frequency, and duration, as well as the family's recommended visitation plan.

### ***Solution Based Casework: June 2021 – October 2021***

- Case Consultation – Supervisory Training
- Solution Base Training – Initial Training
- Hands-on training to improve case assessment, case planning, and case management practices utilizing the theoretical foundations of family life cycle theory, relapse prevention and cognitive behavioral therapy theory, and the solution focused family therapy.

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***Racial Biases: January 2021 – June 2021 (4 Modules)***

- History, Policy, Data, Evolutionary Change, vs. Revolutionary Change
- Power and Privilege and Protective Factors in Child Welfare
- Mindset Shifting – Courageous Leadership, Systemic Change
- Anti-racist Community Framework for Child and Family Well-Being

***The Structured Decision Making System for Child Protective Services: December 2019***

- Extensive, hands-on training related to the updated structured decision making process for child welfare professional including critical aspects of the agency's intervention with children and families including the application of evidence-based tools utilized to assist field staff in making important decisions.

## Volunteer Experience

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***July 2019 – October 2021: Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge, Hospital volunteer***

- Care for injured and orphaned wildlife
- Mentor and train new volunteers
- Handle phone calls with the public, attend events with the public, fundraising efforts, and community outreach efforts.
- Complete intakes with the public for injured and orphaned wildlife entering the hospital.
- Prioritize and multitask the fast-paced environment of the rehabilitation hospital which includes assessing injuries, bottle feeding orphans, preparing feed dishes, cleaning, answering phone calls throughout the day, dealing with the public, providing directions to the hospital, answering questions and providing advice.
- Handle all necessary paperwork and monetary donations for intakes and organize paperwork in accordance with agency policy.

***January 2008 – 2018: Shelter volunteer and adoption screener, Ocean County Health Department Volunteer Auxiliary for Animal Shelters, Inc., Jackson, NJ and Toms River, NJ***

- Handle public adoptions in the shelter or Petsmart locations. This includes screening of applicants (questions/interview process), background checks, processing all adoption related paperwork, and preparing animal for adoption.
- Care for shelter animals, administer medication, handle all shift paperwork including management of donations and application fees, handle questions from the public.

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- Attend all fundraising events, community outreach efforts, shelter events, and TNR efforts (trap-neuter-return).
- Supervise, train, and mentor new volunteers on adoption processes, how to handle public questions, paperwork, etc.

**2008 – 2009: Victim advocate, Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), St. Francis Counseling Center, Long Beach Island, NJ**

- Respond to calls from the Sheriff's department pertaining to victims of sexual assault.
- Provide support and information at medical centers/hospitals and/or law enforcement centers and proceedings.
- Provide victims with referrals to community resources as well as information regarding victims' rights under the law.
- Complete all associated paperwork in accordance with agency policy
- Be available in shifts and manage an on-call schedule.

**January 1994 – 2001: Volunteer instructor, Chariot Riders Inc., Therapeutic Riding Academy, Manchester NJ**

- Provide horseback riding instruction to children and adults with cognitive, physical, and emotional limitations and disabilities whereby they can learn to improve their self-esteem, mobility, self-control, focus, and overall physical well-being.