

2024 CWFIA Class Synopsis'

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: FOUNDATION OF GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

To kick off our conference, the California Welfare Fraud Investigator's Association is proud to welcome Sam Adolphsen, Policy Director for the Foundation of Government Accountability.

The Foundation for Government Accountability (FGA) is a nonprofit organization that primarily focuses on reducing the welfare state, reducing restrictions on teenage workers, and blocking the expansion of Medicaid at both the state and federal levels. FGA conducts policy research and its experts recommend free-market policies intended to promote work, reduce dependency, and increase opportunity.

Our Keynote will be presented in two parts. Part one will consist of an overview of the U.S. House of Representatives "Farm Bill" and how it impacts the SNAP program (i.e. CalFresh).

Part two will consist of a panel discussion of experts regarding the SNAP program, pending Farm Bill, and what is needed to bring program integrity back to our public social service programs.

Instructors:

Sam Adolphsen: The Keynote will be led by Sam Adolphsen, Policy Director for the Foundation of Government Accountability. He leads FGA's policy team and focuses on sponsor education to advance FGA's research and policy efforts.

Prior to joining FGA, Sam served as Vice President of Rockwood Solutions and as Chief Operating Officer at the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. He holds both a Bachelor of Business Administration and Master of Business from Husson University.

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Sam first experienced the value of work while harvesting blueberries and helping his dad fish for baby eels as a means of supplemental income. He quickly learned that work is not a chore, but is an opportunity to learn a new skill, add value to a family, and experience purpose. Sam has testified before Congress and several state legislative committees. His work has been featured in the Federalist, National Review Online, Fox News, Fox Business News, the Daily Caller, and the Washington Times.

Jennifer Tiller: Jennifer Tiller serves as the Deputy Staff Director of the House Committee on Agriculture under the leadership of Chairman Glenn Thompson (R-PA). Previously, Tiller served as both Deputy Staff Director and Senior Professional Staff for Chairman K. Michael Conaway (R-TX). Tiller has worked on a variety of legislative efforts affecting U.S. agriculture and domestic nutrition programs, most notably the 2018 Farm Bill and various pandemic-related aid packages. A Syracuse, New York native, Tiller holds a Master of Public Administration from Marist College and a Master of Business Administration from Syracuse University.

Andrew McClenahan: Andrew McClenahan is the former Director of the Office of Public Benefits Integrity with the Florida Department of Children and Families and currently works for Lexis Nexis as part of their Federal Government Solutions team.

McClenahan has over 24 years of service in the federal, state and local public sector in the areas of technology, investigations and fraud prevention to design and implement government agency solutions to uphold program integrity. McClenahan served in various sworn capacities with the Tallahassee Police Department for ten years before joining the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. He retired as an Investigative Captain in the Office of the Inspector General for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

McClenahan has a Bachelor of Science in Criminology from Florida State University. He is a Certified Public Manager, a Certified Welfare Fraud Investigator, and a Certified Inspector

General Investigator. He is also a member of the Board of Directors for the United Council on Welfare Fraud.

Gregory Mahony: Gregory Mahony is currently the Chief of the Special Investigations Unit for the San Bernardino County Human Services Agency. He is also currently the President of the California Welfare Fraud Investigator's Association and has led the associations efforts in federal outreach.

He began his law enforcement career in 1983 with the Los Angeles Police Department and served most of his years in South Central and Skid Row as a patrol officer to homicide detective. He retired from LAPD after 20 years of service.

For the last 7 years, Chief Mahony has served as a fraud fighter in our public social service programs and has been engaged in our efforts to improve program integrity at the federal and state level.

CASE STUDY: OPERATION URBAN JUSTICE

"Operation Urban Justice," was a large-scale law enforcement operation that resulted in the arrest of 15 individuals who allegedly used information from "skimmed" electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards to make unauthorized withdrawals of funds that had been disbursed to low-income individuals.

The operation involved over 300 law enforcement officers who began monitoring about 20 ATM locations across the Los Angeles area and identified individuals who were making multiple cash withdrawals with EBT cards

The case resulted in federal prosecutions and led to additional investigations that extended to Romania.

Instructors:

Nisha Chandran: Nisha Chandran is an Assistant United States Attorney in the Central District of California. She is a member of the Corporate and Securities Fraud Strike force, where she specializes in complex corporate and securities fraud investigations involving business institutions, the financial system, and corporate executives. She was previously a member of the Cyber and Intellectual Property Crimes Section, focusing on cyber-enabled fraud. Prior to joining the government, she was in private practice, specializing in white collar investigations.

Jarred Medenwald: Special Agent Jarred Medenwald has been with the U.S. Secret Service for 8 years. SA Medenwald is currently assigned to the Homeland Security Investigations El Camino Real Financial Crimes Taskforce in Los Angeles, CA. SA Medenwald specializes in investigations related to payment card skimming, physical/logical ATM attacks, and Romanian organized crime.

Teresa Healy: Special Agent Teresa Healy has been with the U.S. Secret Service for 8 years. SA Healy is currently assigned to the Homeland Security Investigations El Camino Real Financial Crimes Taskforce in Los Angeles, CA. SA Healy specializes in fraud cases involving cryptocurrency.

Caroline Bitar: Financial Analyst Caroline Bitar has been with the U.S. Secret Service for five years. Caroline is currently assigned to the Homeland Security Investigations El Camino Real Financial Crimes Taskforce in Los Angeles, CA. She provides investigative support to various cases across the globe involving skimming, elder financial exploitation, money laundering and other complex financial crimes.

FRAUD 101:

Fraud 101 will cover the basics of eligibility for Investigators. This class covers basics of eligibility in CalFresh and CalWORKS programs. The course will cover basic eligibility areas including household composition, income reporting, semi-annual reporting, income reporting thresholds, overpayments, over issuances, etc.

Instructor:

Becky Ennis: Becky Ennis has been with the County of San Bernardino since September 1999. She has served as an Eligibility Worker processing and maintaining eligibility on hundreds of CalWORKS and CalFresh cases. She has also served as a MEDS Liaison, verifying that State and County databases match and correcting system errors as they occurred. She has helped develop Countywide training with the MEDS Coordinator that led to a newly created MEDS position to ensure State and County databases matched countywide.

Beginning in 2010, Ms. Ennis served as a Quality Review Specialist responsible for the function of verifying IEVS Fleeing Felon and Prisoner Matches. She was also assigned the responsibility of Fraud Budgeter and budgeted restitution and collections for all fraud cases, which to date, has totaled over 1000 cases. She worked closely with the District Attorney's Office on all welfare fraud cases and has been a court recognized expert witness in the area of eligibility. Ms. Ennis is currently a Quality Review Supervisor responsible for overseeing fraud budgeting, criminal matches, CLETS and quality assurance reviews and is responsible for overseeing budgeting on all welfare fraud cases.

FRAUD 102:

Fraud 102 covers the Income Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) roles and process in fraud investigations. This class will cover the components of IEVS, integrated fraud detection, matches, processing time frames, calculations of overpayments/over issuances, and budgeting methodology.

Instructor:

Anita Calderon: Anita Calderon is a Quality Review Supervisor with the County of San Bernardino, Human Services Agency. Anita is an expert in IEVS and has worked specifically in the IEVS role, working hand in hand with the Special Investigations Unit for the last 8 years. She has previously created training courses in the area of IEVS/IFDS Budgeting.

FRAUD 103:

Fraud 103 covers the preparation and presentation of welfare fraud cases for prosecution. This course will cover statutes involved, different types of criminal cases for welfare fraud, elements of proof, proving false statements and intent, evidence requirements, perjury requirements, conducting suspect and witness interviews, and preparing for preliminary hearings and trial.

Instructor:

Nancy Cooper: Nancy Cooper attended Loyola Marymount University as an undergraduate from 1979-1983 and graduated Pepperdine Law School in 1986. She successfully passed the bar exam and started her legal career with the San Bernardino District Attorney's Office in August of 1986.

With over 30 years of legal experience as a sworn Deputy District Attorney, she has handled all kinds of cases from traffic to homicide. Ms. Cooper has also been a part of specialized units that include Gangs Unit, Elder Abuse Unit, Family violence and Welfare fraud. She served as the dedicated Deputy District Attorney specifically responsible for welfare fraud prosecutions for 5 ½ years. She was recently transferred and now serves in a general trial assignment as of last March.

CASE STUDY: OPERATION FAMILY AFFAIR

“Operation Family Affair,” was a broad public social services investigation that extended across multiple family members and public social service programs. Some members of the family worked within these social service programs and the investigation crossed into IHSS fraud, Public Housing Authority Fraud, and Public Assistance Fraud.

Instructors:

Monica Hernandez: Monica Hernandez is an Investigator with the Orange County District Attorney’s Office. She has served as a member of the Orange County District Attorney’s Office for the last seven (7) years and is assigned specifically to handle investigations into public assistance programs.

Monica has a bachelor’s degree from Bristol University in Business Administration and has also been on the forefront of investigations involving EBT crimes.

Amanda Veach: Amanda Veach is an Investigator with the Orange County District Attorney’s Office. She has served as a member of the Orange County District Attorney’s Office as an Investigator for the last seven (7) years. Prior to that she served as an Investigative Assistant for four (4) years and as an Evidence Technician for six (6) years. For the last two years, she has served as the lead case agent on the Orange County EBT theft cases that lead the state in arrests for EBT crimes. Her current assignment is to specifically handle investigations involving public assistance programs.

INTERVIEW AND INTERROGATION (PART ONE AND TWO)

Interviewing skills are the cornerstone to quality investigative work. In the field of program integrity and welfare fraud investigations, every investigator needs to be equipped with this tool. This two-part series will provide investigators with a tool kit for conducting interviews and for reading witness and suspect responses. A confession is the single best piece of evidence in any case and this course will equip investigators with the tools to be a stronger interviewer.

Instructor:

Brian Meux: Brian Meux has served as a law enforcement officer in Northern California for over 24 years. Mr. Meux worked for 14 years as a detective investigating various types of crimes and incidents including child abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence and homicide. He has testified numerous times in Superior and Federal Court in a variety of hearings and cases, both criminal and civil. Mr Meux is known for being well prepared for court and for testifying in a professional, unbiased manner.

He has conducted countless interviews related to criminal and civil matters and has taught interview and investigative techniques to peace officers and civilians throughout California for many years.

TACTICAL FIRST AID

Tactical First Aid is a course designed to provide law enforcement and nonsworn staff with basic life support tactical casualty care (TCC) techniques and a broad overview of law enforcement tactical operations and first responder rescue operations methodologies.

Instructor:

Venus Felix: Venus Felix is the founder of Triple Nine Training LLC, an organization committed to equipping individuals and communities with essential lifesaving skills. With a 24-year career as a Los Angeles County Deputy Sheriff, Ms. Felix offers expertise and insight in her role as a trainer and mentor.

Deputy Felix is a Certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Certified Tactical Medicine Instructor and has completed a range of advanced courses, including POST First Aid/CPR/AED Instructor, Basic Tactical Medical Instructor, Off-Road Vehicle Operations, Physical Training Instructor, and POST Instructor Development Institute. She currently teaches the First Aid/CPR/AED Instructor course.

Jose Diaz: Jose Diaz is currently a Civilian and Law Enforcement Tactics Instructor. He has been an instructor for 7 years and, currently employed with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and has been for the last 18 years. Prior to becoming a Tactics Instructor, he was a Field Training Officer, worked as a Patrol Deputy, Special Assignment Deputy and worked on a specialized team concentrated on ratifying quality of life issues.

As an instructor, he has attended numerous instructor level courses, including but not limited to: Adult learning concepts, Basic patrol tactics, building approach, entry, and search techniques, Tactical medical/emergency first aid, application and usage of less lethal weapons, Active shooter response, Single Deputy/Officer response to an active killing event, Tactical Decision making for supervisors, and Intermediate search warrant service Tactics.

Mr. Diaz has trained agencies ranging from City/Municipal, various County Agencies (Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, San Bernardino, Riverside) and Federal Agencies such as Federal Air Marshalls, Secret Service, Army National Guard, and Postal Inspectors. He has also trained civilian personnel such as Deputy District Attorney's, City Counsel members including Mayors of various cities and anti-Law Enforcement activists. Tactical medical/emergency first aid is one of the many courses he instructs across the law enforcement training spectrum.

ADMINISTRATIVE DISQUALIFICATION HEARINGS

Administrative Disqualification Hearings (ADH) are intertwined with welfare fraud. Not every case will rise to the level of a criminal investigation. ADH offers an alternative to seeking justice in welfare fraud prosecutions.

This course will cover how to review, prepare, and present an administrative disqualification hearing statement of position. The course will also cover what makes an ADH successful as well as some of the pitfalls resulting in a denial or dismissal.

Instructor:

Kandi Griffith: Kandi Griffith is a Welfare Fraud Specialist for San Joaquin County who specialized in conducting ADH investigations. She has served as a Welfare Fraud Specialist for the last 13 years. Prior to that, she served as a dispatcher and an eligibility worker. She has extensive knowledge in the area of CalFRESH and CalWORKS programs as it applies to both eligibility and investigations.

ROMANIAN HISTORY AND ATM SKIMMING

Since 2019, EBT skimming has seen a steady growth and been a major crime problem that continues to impact the integrity of our public social service programs. This course will delve into the history of Romanian ATM skimming and how Romanian organized crime connected with EBT theft and public social service programs.

Instructor:

Shawn Ferris: Shawn Ferris is currently the Chief of the Special Investigations Unit for Riverside County Department of Public Social Services. He has over 33 years of law enforcement experience, mostly involving the investigation of various forms of fraud. For the last 7 years, he has served as the Chief and focused solely on the investigation of public social service programs.

Amanda Veach: Amanda Veach is an Investigator with the Orange County District Attorney's Office. She has served as a member of the Orange County District Attorney's Office as an Investigator for the last seven (7) years. Prior to that she served as an Investigative Assistant for four (4) years and as an Evidence Technician for six (6) years. For the last two years, she has served as the lead case agent on the Orange County EBT theft cases that lead the state in arrests for EBT crimes. Her current assignment is to specifically handle investigations involving public assistance programs.

GEO TRACKING

Physically locating a person or entity based upon certain characteristics such as IP address, Media Access Control (MAC) address, physical characteristics of an emitted signal or other identifying characteristics is of the greatest interest to law enforcement, intelligence, and public safety organizations including Special Investigations Units. This course will discuss the concept of Geo Tracking and provide real world case examples that the fraud investigator can correlate to welfare fraud and EBT theft investigations.

Instructor:

Robert Musso: Robert Musso began his law enforcement career in 2012 as a sworn reserve deputy sheriff and quickly transitioned to a full-time patrol officer.

Mr. Musso spent his first five years in law enforcement as a Deputy Sheriff but became more interested in investigations of an in-depth nature that were intellectually challenging. He then transferred to the California Department of Health Care Services and works in a niche field of law enforcement focusing on cases involving Medi Cal fraud.

He currently holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice and a Master of Public Administration.

CURRENT CRIME TRENDS IN PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICE INVESTIGATIONS

Investigators and program integrity professionals are encountering new and different crime trends every day. This course will provide a panel discussion format to discuss new and different areas that are impacting Special Investigations Units across the state. Some of those areas include EBT theft, EBT Re-pinning, internal fraud, pregnancy verification fraud, as well as different analyst tools that can be used at the local level to combat these new trends.

Instructor(s):

Heather Tallent: Heather Tallent will serve as the moderator. Senior Investigator Heather Tallent has been a peace officer since 1999, serving as a reserve deputy/police officer for the Simi Valley Police Department and an Investigator for the Ventura County District Attorney's Office. She has experience in investigating gang crimes, sexual assaults, homicides, officer involved shootings, real estate fraud, and welfare fraud. Heather currently supervises the Government Fraud Unit for the Ventura County DA's Office and has also served as the CWFIA Treasurer.

Panelist:

Andrew Keen: Andrew Keen is a Staff Analyst at San Joaquin County Human Services Agency. He is a graduate of Cal Poly Humboldt and holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics. He currently works for the San Joaquin County Welfare Department and has developed specialized expertise in using EBT data to research skimming and other electronic theft since November 2021. This work has resulted in a commendation from the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors in September 2022 and a personal letter of appreciation from the Investigations Branch of CDSS in January 2024.

Patrick Adams: Patrick Adams is currently a District Attorney Investigator for the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office. Mr. Adams specializes in public assistance investigations and is currently involved in the investigations of welfare fraud and EBT crimes.

Ron Moruzzi: Ron Moruzzi is currently an Assistant Chief with the Riverside County DPSS Special Investigations Unit. He oversees investigative operations and has managed EBT theft operations, EBT re-pin operations, and a large internal fraud investigation involving the use of fraudulent pregnancy verifications. He has over a decades of experience investigating different types of welfare fraud.

Jorge Martinez: Jorge Martinez is a Supervising Investigator with the California Department of Social Services and supervises the newly created EBT Crimes Unit. He has worked as a central figure at the state level in improving communication amongst counties and FIS to combat the EBT theft problem and currently trains counties and local law enforcement on tools to combat EBT theft.

SOCIAL MEDIA (PART ONE AND TWO)

Open-source investigations and tools are essential to the modern-day investigator. Much like latent prints were used decades ago, digital prints and identifiers bring new age policing as an essential component to investigating crimes. Suspects routinely leave digital tracks that will help us identify criminal behavior. This course will provide students with tools and techniques for using open-source intelligence in their investigations.

Instructor:

Scott Kilpatrick: Scott Kilpatrick has served as a Police Officer and Detective for the Baltimore County Police Department for over 20 years, including 18 years as a Detective.

Early in his career, Detective Kilpatrick played a vital role in the Vice Narcotics Unit, where he employed innovative social media strategies to dismantle drug trafficking networks. His expertise was further demonstrated when he exposed a rogue unit within the Baltimore Police Department, a triumph that was chronicled in the book and TV series *We Own This City*.

Detective Kilpatrick's later transitioned to the Special Victims Unit and later to the Crimes Against Children Unit. In these roles, he adeptly utilized social media and open-source intelligence (OSINT) to locate suspects involved in heinous crimes such as sexual abuse and human trafficking. His journey is defined by a ceaseless pursuit of knowledge in open source and social media intelligence (SOCMINT).

Mr. Kiplatrick has numerous certifications including Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission Certified Instructor and an NWC3-accredited Certified Cyber Crime Intelligence Analyst, Investigator, and Examiner. Detective Kilpatrick has completed diverse training programs on digital forensics, online investigations, and cutting-edge techniques.

IN HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS) FRAUD

Fraud and theft in the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) programs continues to grow throughout the state. This course will outline the various types of fraud occurring in the IHSS program and will assist in discussing the different investigative tools used to investigate IHSS fraud.

Instructor(s):

James Sigl: James Sigl began his career with the State of California in 1991 as a student assistant. After receiving a degree in biochemistry, he pursued a career in law enforcement. Mr. Sigl spent nine years at the California Department of Public Health, conducting regulatory and food borne illness investigations and in 2009, he transferred to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and his focus shifted to investigating Medi-Cal fraud. At DHCS, he was assigned to the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office IHSS Task Force providing support in the area of data analytics and fraud investigations. Mr. Sigl is currently a Supervising Investigator and leads a team that covers eighteen counties in Northern California.

Robert Musso: Robert Musso began his law enforcement career in 2012 as a sworn reserve deputy sheriff and quickly transitioned to a full-time patrol officer. Mr. Musso spent his first five years in law enforcement as a Deputy Sheriff but became more interested in investigations of an in-depth nature that were intellectually challenging. He then transferred to the California Department of Health Care Services and works in a niche field of law enforcement focusing on cases involving Medi Cal fraud.

He currently holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice and a Master of Public Administration.