



# Violence Reduction Network Quarterly Newsletter

Strategic Solutions • Focused Actions • Reduced Violence

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## VRN Cumulative Statistics To Date, the VRN has provided:

Customer Satisfaction Rating	4.4/5.0
Peer Exchanges	4
Research Partner Connections Supported	7
Resource Documents Cataloged	130+
SME Hours Provided	206+
SSL Hours Provided	1,055
Technical Assistance/ Resource Requests	117
Training Hours Delivered	5,895+
Training Deliveries	18
Training Participants	722
Webinar Deliveries	5
Webinar Participants	175
Webinar Overall Rating	3.5/5.0
Web Site Documents Downloaded	391
Web Site Page Views	5,328
Weekly News Deliveries	48
Weekly News Overall Rating	4.5/5.0

## *We are pleased to release the second VRN Quarterly Newsletter covering January to March 2015!*

As the first six months of the VRN program have quickly passed, we are delighted to report on the tremendous progress and violence reduction resources that have been leveraged through VRN for our five local communities. As shown in the VRN Cumulative Statistics section, VRN has successfully delivered (or is currently coordinating) over 115 requests for assistance! These requests include training, targeted technical assistance, informational resources, peer exchanges, and other violence reduction support, delivered from existing U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) resources. The Site Highlights section of this Newsletter provides additional details regarding site activities.

In addition to the training and technical assistance deliveries, DOJ leadership will soon identify several new VRN sites.

The VRN team now conducts quarterly evaluative interviews with site representatives to assess the quality and helpfulness of resources provided to the sites. Interviewees have provided valuable, candid, and constructive feedback that will further enhance the VRN for current and new sites. In addition to the interviews conducted by the VRN team, the DOJ National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has funded a process assessment of VRN, which is currently under way. See page 2 for additional information on VRN evaluation activities.

We would like to thank you for your continued support and participation in the VRN and look forward to the activities the next quarter will bring!

*The VRN Team*

# Across the Network

## VRN Evaluation

The VRN team conducted interviews with select site representatives to evaluate the training and technical assistance and various resources provided to the sites in Quarter 1. Interviewees provided feedback on the following types of resources provided: online or print resources, DOJ resources, subject-matter expert (SME) assistance, and peer-to-peer assistance. Interviews also included general questions regarding VRN, including network-wide activities/ Webinars, progress to date, Strategic Site Liaisons (SSLs), future VRN activities, and overall program feedback. The VRN team greatly appreciates the candid feedback from VRN participants that contributes to improved services. In addition to the internal interviews, NIJ is conducting a formal process assessment. VRN site representatives may be contacted by assessment representatives next quarter.



## FBI Violent Crime Coordinator Orientation

On January 27 and 28, 2015, the FBI hosted an orientation meeting for the five Violent Crime Coordinators (VCC) and VRN site representatives. One VCC has been assigned to each VRN site to facilitate access to FBI resources (see below). At the orientation, FBI Director James Comey emphasized the FBI's commitment to VRN and asked each participant for his or her feedback, saying: "We can be doing really well, but we can still find ways to do better." Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Deputy Director Kristen Mahoney and VRN Co-Directors Kristie Brackens and Michael Seelman provided an introductory overview of VRN. The orientation participants learned about additional resources available to VRN sites, such as technology from the Office of Technology Development, evidence response teams, and electronic scanning and indexing of paper investigative files. VRN site representatives gave positive feedback regarding the information provided and dialogue with the Director.

## Social Network Analysis

Social network analysis can be an effective tool for law enforcement to examine connections and interactions between known offenders and their associates. Given the growing interest in developing intervention and prevention strategies to address violence through social network analysis, VRN conducted interviews with representatives from several VRN sites to assess current needs and capabilities regarding social network analysis. Several subject-matter experts will begin delivering training and targeted technical assistance to Oakland, Richmond, Alameda County, and Contra Costa County in California in the upcoming months. Camden and Detroit have also expressed interest in this area, and the VRN team is coordinating these requests.

### FBI Resources Dedicated to VRN

1. Violent Crime Coordinators
2. Digital Imaging and Video Recovery Team (DIVRT) social media "commercials" for criminal identification
3. Investigative technology assets
4. Source development and intelligence analysis
5. Public affairs: media training and electronic highway billboards
6. Intelligence training and technical assistance
7. Victim assistance
8. Homicide case closure support
9. Criminal behavior-based investigative support
10. Evidence analysis and other technical support

## Network Expansion

DOJ leadership are in the final stages of identifying and selecting **five additional sites** to join VRN in Fall 2015.

## Fall Summit

The 2015 VRN Summit is tentatively scheduled for **September 28–30, 2015**. More details coming soon!

# VRN Webinars

## ▶ **Innovative Strategies to Address Youth Violence**—January 2015

Youth violence is not a problem any one agency can solve alone, but by working together and pooling resources, we have the ability to reduce youth violence in our communities. This Webinar on youth violence engaged participants in discussions about innovative approaches to working with high-risk and gang-involved youth, based on the city of [San Jose's Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force](#) and the application of the [Milwaukee Homicide Review Commission](#) process on Juvenile Case Review. In addition, local police department representatives shared their expertise.

## ▶ **Community Engagement in High-Violence Neighborhoods**—February 2015

During this Webinar on community engagement, participants learned about innovative approaches to engaging communities in high-violence neighborhoods. Mr. Ed Chung of the [DOJ National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice](#) provided opening remarks about national perspectives and strategies, and then participants heard from three chiefs of police (Chief Scott Thomson from Camden, New Jersey; Chief Chris Magnus from Richmond, California; and Chief Bobby Cummings from Wilmington, Delaware) regarding their experiences and expertise in community engagement before opening up the discussion to the entire VRN network.

## ▶ **Strategies to Address Witness Intimidation**—March 2015

Intimidation of witnesses can be a significant challenge for violence reduction efforts because it infringes upon the effective and fair operation of the judicial process. During this Webinar, participants heard from subject-matter experts regarding innovative ways to address witness intimidation. Ms. Kristine Hamann, BJA Visiting Fellow, provided opening remarks and facilitated the discussion among nationally recognized subject-matter experts regarding their expertise in implementing effective strategies to protect witnesses.

**To access all of the VRN Webinars,  
visit the VRN Web site at**

<https://vrnetwork.org/Home/ItemsOfInterest/VRNWebinars>.

## Subject-Matter Expert Spotlight

### Michael Roosa

Senior Policy Advisor  
Bureau of Justice Assistance



In addition to presenting at the VRN Summit in September 2014, Mr. Michael Roosa has since provided VRN sites with invaluable assistance related to criminal justice technology capabilities. As an experienced implementer and data integrator, Mr. Roosa's portfolio includes corrections information sharing, justice to health project transportability, technology forecasting, and national standards development, and because of his law enforcement background, he assists in special projects targeting policy and technology gaps at all levels of the enforcement effort. Mr. Roosa has provided tailored assistance to our VRN sites in Camden, Detroit, Oakland/Richmond, and Wilmington.

In Camden, Mr. Roosa conducted a technology assessment in the police department to evaluate the current capabilities and provide recommendations for future enhancements. Mr. Roosa and Mr. Todd Maxwell of BJA reviewed license plate readers, CCTV systems, crime analysis, and more! Mr. Roosa played an integral role with BJA in implementing the process of information sharing between community corrections and law enforcement in the Camden area.

Last quarter, Mr. Roosa completed a technology review in Detroit regarding N-Dex data and met with representatives from the Detroit Police Department, Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, Detroit Public Schools, and Michigan State Police. Mr. Roosa provided his assessment report to the Detroit team in January and presented his findings on a conference call in March.

In February, Mr. Roosa, in coordination with Mr. Maxwell, visited all of the primary Oakland/Richmond VRN partners, including Oakland Police Department, Alameda County District Attorney's Office, Alameda County Sheriff's Office, Richmond Police Department, Contra Costa County District Attorney's Office, and Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office, to assess the technological capabilities and provided a report summary to the partners.

In Wilmington, Mr. Roosa conducted multiple site visits to assess current technology capabilities. Mr. Roosa worked with Lieutenant Sam Hood of the Baltimore Police Department to examine the CCTV cameras in the city.

# Site Highlights

Camden, New Jersey

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This quarter, the Camden VRN site has taken advantage of the wide spectrum of resources available to the Network. The Camden team has already participated in and is currently planning additional trainings, peer exchanges, and targeted technical assistance to assist with their violence reduction efforts.

In January, the High Point, North Carolina, Police Department (HPPD) hosted a 1.5-day [peer-to-peer exchange](#) for the Camden and Detroit VRN site teams to explore the [HPPD Offender-Focused Domestic Violence Initiative \(OFDVI\)](#). HPPD implemented this successful model to combat domestic violence using the focused-deterrence approach. This approach has often focused on violent and gang-affiliated offenders (offender groups) but has not been applied to domestic violence offenders. Following the site visit, the Camden County Police Department (CCPD) modified some of its policies to coincide with strategies gleaned from High Point. CCPD is working with the Camden County Prosecutor's Office to create a municipal and violent crime prosecution section that will focus on domestic violence. A county prosecutor has already been hired to specifically concentrate on domestic violence cases.

Thanks to collaboration among CCPD, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and the Philadelphia Police Department, an [ATF National Integrated Ballistics Information Network \(NIBIN\)](#) machine was installed at CCPD to serve Camden County and other agencies in the region. This machine will assist in the identification of links between firearms-related violent crimes.

Also in January 2015, Camden site representatives attended the [U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration \(DEA\) Search, People Search, and Investigating Social Networks and Website Exploitation training](#), during which officers learned about social media investigation and other technology topics.

In February, the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) conducted a [regional grant training](#) for Camden and the surrounding areas. The training focused on determining readiness to apply for grant funding, steps for agencies to prepare a competitive grant application, and critical components of a grant proposal.

In late February, the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) hosted a training for CCPD as part of the USMS Director's Strategic Plan and Priority for Officer Safety. The training focused on three core subject matters: VirTra V-300 System, tactical training, and trauma medical training. Approximately 170 officers have been trained in the VirTra system, and tactical and trauma training classes are scheduled in July and September.

The [National Gang Center](#) provided an [Anti-Gang Seminar for Law Enforcement Chief Executives](#) in March, which 24 representatives from CCPD and other local agencies attended. This seminar serves to advance anti-gang strategies by providing an environment for law enforcement executives to network and share different approaches to gang issues.

Last quarter, through collaboration with the New Jersey State Police and BJA leadership, CCPD was granted access to [statewide probation and parole data](#) to augment daily violence reduction efforts. The VRN team developed an evidence-based document, [Improving Public Safety and Reducing Recidivism: Police-Corrections Information Sharing and Collaboration](#), to encourage police-corrections information sharing and collaboration.

In the coming months, Camden plans to participate in ARC GIS (crime mapping) training, Crime Analysis on Demand assistance, FBI Active Shooter training, National District Attorneys Association Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault training, a site visit to the New York City Police Department (NYPD), social network analysis technical assistance, FBI Uniform Crime Reporting training, and victim witness assistance.



During this quarter, the Chicago Police Department began biweekly calls with VRN team members to discuss potential training and technical assistance for the Chicago site.

Ms. Joan Brody conducted a site visit in Chicago to provide grant assistance regarding future grant opportunities, identifying new research partners, and developing a grant strategy.

A **Crime Analysis Symposium for Law Enforcement Leaders**, funded by BJA and hosted by the Police Foundation and the International Association of Crime Analysts, is being planned for Chicago partners in July. This symposium will provide an overview of crime analysis best practices and organizational considerations necessary to integrate crime analysis and evidence-based policing strategies into their agencies' everyday practices. **Blue Courage** training is also under consideration.

In addition to VRN, Chicago is actively involved in other violence reduction, crime prevention, and youth-related programs. In fact, Chicago is a **National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention** site. In December 2014, Mayor Rahm Emanuel's Commission for a Safer Chicago—a group of more than 130 city and community leaders, parents, educators, and youth citizens—published a **report** and a strategic plan with recommendations to reduce youth violence in Chicago.

On March 31, Mayor Emanuel hosted a quarterly meeting with the Commission to discuss the progress made in their focus areas, which include increasing employment opportunities for youth, promoting

restorative justice in schools, keeping youth out of the juvenile justice system, improvising relationships between officers and youth, treating trauma, and increasing access to safe places and activities. Chicago Police Superintendent Garry F. McCarthy stated *"Our officers are unquestionably the backbone of public safety, but reducing crime and violence requires a community-driven effort and real partnerships with residents in neighborhoods throughout our city. The Commission's work represents the important work we are doing together to continue achieving the public safety goals we all have for our city."*

Over the past three months, the members of the Commission have been diligently working to implement the recommendations from the report. So far, the total number of summer jobs available for youth in 2015 has expanded to 24,000; the number of slots in One Summer Chicago Plus, a jobs program for justice-involved youth, has doubled from 1,000 to 2,000; and seven new parent-staffed restorative justice peace centers were opened in Chicago Public Schools. In addition, RISE, an intensive mentoring and intervention program for youth, has expanded from 8 pilot sites to 18 sites citywide; community-police relations have improved through the expansion of the Bridging the Divide program (six additional police districts over the coming year); and the Youth Peace Grant program, in partnership with the Mikva Challenge, was launched, providing micro-grants up to \$5,000 to youth groups that develop projects to help address violence in their own communities. Numerous other accomplishments are available at the **[Commission's Quarterly Update for Q1 2015](#)**.



# Site Highlights

Detroit, Michigan

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In January, the Detroit site kicked off the quarter with representatives from the Detroit Police Department (DPD) and the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office participating with Camden, New Jersey, VRN partners in a site visit to the High Point, North Carolina, Police Department to explore its [OFDVI](#). Participants learned specific focused-deterrence strategies for domestic violence offenders and examined case studies, implementation steps, and resources. A site visit summary report will be provided to the VRN community as a resource for combating domestic violence.

Ms. Joan Brody conducted a site visit regarding [grant writing and development](#) in February 2015 at DPD for all Detroit VRN partners (executives and grant personnel).

The International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST) hosted a training on [Building Analytical Capacity: A Workshop for Law Enforcement Executives](#), supported by BJA, in March. This training was very well-received, and over 60 participants attended this training session from the local VRN agencies.

*"[The VRN] provides an opportunity for agencies to interface with the federal agencies to dialogue about different types of resources. It's beneficial because we can focus on best practices."*

*—Detroit USAO*

In conjunction with the Building Analytical Capacity workshop, DOJ officials and the VRN team met with site representatives to assess the status and needs for assistance from VRN on the ground in Detroit. These strategic meetings allowed for direct dialogue between BJA leadership and local Detroit partners to assess what types of assistance VRN can provide that would benefit

Detroit. BJA is currently developing a plan for upcoming assistance, and [Dr. Ed McGarrell](#) has begun working with the site to provide research analysis support. Next quarter, Dr. McGarrell is preparing to embed crime analysis graduate students from Michigan State University in VRN partner agencies for analytic support.

Dr. Neil Websdale, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Northern Arizona University and Director of the [National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative](#),

has begun working with Detroit. In January, Dr. Websdale participated in a biweekly VRN team call to discuss the assistance he can provide; in March, he participated in the site visit with DOJ officials; and he will continue working with the site in the coming months.



Presentation at HPPD site visit



# Site Highlights

## Oakland/Richmond, California

In the past three months, the Oakland/Richmond VRN partners have participated in several trainings and received technical assistance resources in a number of areas.

Ms. Lorie Fridell conducted **fair and impartial policing training** in February 2015 that focused on the effect of implicit bias and the information and skills needed to reduce and manage officer biases. The training addressed racial/ethnic bias, as well as biases based on other factors, such as gender, sexual orientation, religion, and socioeconomic status. Midlevel managers and executives from all Oakland/Richmond VRN partners attended this training.

The U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO), Northern District of California, hosted a **Law Enforcement Executives' Summit** on Police Legitimacy/Procedural Justice on March 11, 2015, in San Francisco, California. This full-day summit featured numerous DOJ officials: Assistant Attorney General Karol V. Mason for the Office of Justice Programs, Acting Assistant Attorney General Vanita Gupta of the Civil Rights Division, COPS Office Director Ron Davis, and Attorney General's Advisory Committee member U.S. Attorney Carter Stewart, along with



numerous experts in the field. In addition, Oakland Police Department (OPD) Chief Sean Whent and Richmond Police Department (RPD)

Chief Chris Magnus participated in a panel discussion on policing in the 21st century. OPD Assistant Chief Paul Figueroa also provided remarks, and Alameda County District Attorney Nancy O'Malley participated in a panel discussion on the role of prosecutors. The summit focused on strengthening the relationship between law enforcement and the communities they serve—a priority area for law enforcement across the nation. VRN, in coordination with the USAO, provided logistical and technological support in delivering this event. There were 170 attendees, and participants expressed sincere appreciation for the information and presentations provided.



**Tact, Tactics, and Trust (T3™)** introductory training was piloted at the RPD. T3™ is the only police training program that simultaneously addresses the perceptual, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions of social interaction. It integrates the latest scientific research on managing social encounters with validated training techniques. There were nine command-level participants from RPD at this training, and additional follow-up training is under consideration.

Additional upcoming activities include social network analysis targeted technical assistance, Applied Evidence-Based Homicide and Violence Reduction training, Crime Analysis on Demand TTA, and follow-up technical assistance from Mike Roosa's site visit this past quarter.



# Site Highlights

Wilmington, Delaware

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This quarter, the Wilmington VRN team have been active participants in numerous peer exchanges, training, and direct technical assistance.

Representatives from the Wilmington Police Department (WPD) conducted a [site visit to the DEA-run El Paso Intelligence Center \(EPIC\)](#) in El Paso, Texas, in January to explore analytic resources available. As a result of this visit, EPIC intelligence analysts were made available to WPD.

Dr. Jerry Ratcliffe conducted an [analysis on historical crime patterns](#) within Wilmington. Dr. Ratcliffe examined five years' worth of violent crime data and helped Wilmington identify historical areas of violence and examine the relationship between violent crime and calls for service. WPD is using this analysis for operational deployments, and this analysis is the first step in building the crime analysis foundation for WPD.

The Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR), under the oversight of BJA, conducted a [Homicide Investigations Operational Performance Assessment](#) in February 2015. At the request of Chief Cummings, this assessment was performed to assist the WPD efforts to reduce violent crime, avoid wrongful convictions, and conduct high-quality homicide investigations that produce successful prosecutions of homicide offenders. A report was developed and shared with the chief.

[ATF's Matchpoint system](#) is in place in the WPD as of March 23, 2015. VRN is pleased with the expedited turn-around in completing this request. The Match

point system enables the police department to process ballistics comparisons more quickly (i.e., in a matter of hours as opposed to weeks). This accelerated process will assist WPD in daily crime-fighting and violence reduction strategies.

Representatives from the WPD and the Wilmington's Mayor's Office conducted a [peer exchange with the Camden County Police Department \(CCPD\)](#) in March 2015. The purpose of this site visit was to review the Camden County Crime Collaboration (C4) strategy—a collaborative effort of CCPD homicide and undercover operations with the ATF, FBI, DEA, USMS, and USAO—and the CCPD Real Time Crime Center.

Lieutenant Sam Hood of the Baltimore Police Department conducted an [assessment of CCTV cameras](#) as follow-up to BJA Senior Policy Advisor Mike Roosa's technology assessment that occurred last quarter.

Another noteworthy accomplishment this quarter is the implementation of the Gunstat process. Through the technical assistance provided by Chad Kenney and prosecutorial recommendations provided by Gregg Bernstein, Wilmington has now [fully integrated Gunstat measurements](#) into its monthly VRN collaborative meetings.

Next quarter, the Wilmington VRN site representatives plan to visit NYPD with Camden VRN partners and coordinate other training and technical assistance.





# Additional Resources

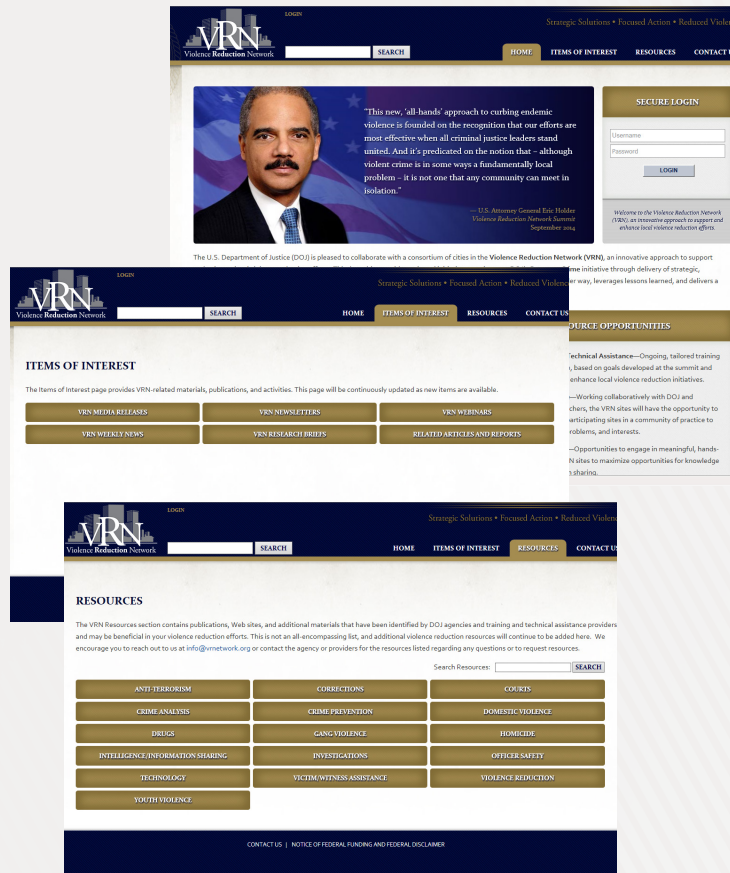
## VRN Web Site

The VRN Web site provides:

- An extensive Resource Library of violence reduction-related materials.
- Items of Interest, including research briefs, previous editions of the VRN Weekly News, the VRN Quarterly Newsletter, and more.
- Secure access to VRN site technical assistance and resource delivery tracking, site team calendars, contact information, and more.

To access these and other resources, visit

[VRNetwork.org](http://VRNetwork.org)



Preventing Youth Violence

In Partnership with the  
NATIONAL FORUM on  
YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The [National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention](http://National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention) will be hosting the *Summit on Preventing Youth Violence* on May 11–13, 2015, and **VRN site partners are invited to attend!** The summit will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Crystal City, Virginia. This year's theme is Reducing Violence/Building Community: From Promise to Practice. The summit this year will serve as a platform to raise awareness about the Administration's agenda related to preventing and treating violence that affects children and youth—with the Forum, Defending Childhood, and Community-Based Violence Initiatives as centerpieces.

If you have further questions about the summit, contact Geroma Void at [geroma.void@usdoj.gov](mailto:geroma.void@usdoj.gov) or Georgina McDowell at [georgina.mcdowell@usdoj.gov](mailto:georgina.mcdowell@usdoj.gov), and they will be happy to assist you.

## VRN Co-Director Transition

VRN Colleagues,

It has been an honor to work with you these past 12 months in our common purpose to reduce violence and make our communities safer. Early in my tenure, we had the opportunity to visit each VRN city, meet dedicated criminal justice professionals, listen to the challenges you face, and learn how we could be of assistance in filling in gaps.

Later, the VRN Summit in September 2014 was our team's first opportunity to deliver the initial subject-matter experts you requested, deepen relationships, share the greater diversity of Department of Justice resources available to you, and demonstrate that we were true partners ready to assist as you directed. Post-summit, we were exhilarated when your feedback told us we had delivered something that had a positive impact on your strategy, and we were inspired to try harder when your feedback explained how we could better hit the mark in the future. Now, as we continue to deliver resources to you and you learn from each other, we are planning to expand to new cities and bring on new team members to this vibrant Network. As I conclude my one-year detail assignment to VRN in late May, I will be pleased to welcome ATF's Chris Robinson. Chris will serve as VRN Co-Director with BJA's Kristie Brackens. With Chris, Kristie, BJA Deputy Director Kristen Mahoney, and the rest of the team—I know you will be in good hands and I can bid you farewell. Thank you for the opportunity to work with you and serve you—it has been a pleasure!



*Michael Seelman*  
VRN Co-Director

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