

Samantha M. Vondrak, Psy.D., ABPP

CAREER SUMMARY

Through my 11 years of active-duty service in the US Army as a clinical psychologist and board-certified forensic psychologist, I gained extensive experience in both the military and civilian sector. I have conducted more than 200 psychological evaluations in forensic and civil settings and participated in over 150 criminal proceedings through expert consultation, expert witness testimony, and forensic evaluations. I have specialized forensic expertise in the areas of memory, false confession and police interrogation, malingering, violence risk assessments, criminal responsibility evaluations, and competency to stand trial evaluations. I also have additional experience conducting psychological autopsies, personnel selection assessments, civil commitment evaluations, and military fitness-for-duty and administrative separation evaluations. I have over 15 years of experience in outpatient and inpatient settings treating and evaluating a wide range of psychopathology, including schizophrenia, mood disorders, sexual disorders, substance abuse and personality disorders.

EDUCATION

Walter Reed Army Medical Center

Forensic Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship

June 2009-July 2011

Washington, DC

The George Washington University

Department of Professional Psychology

Degree: Doctor of Psychology

September 2002-August 2006

Washington, DC

University of Richmond

College of Arts and Sciences

Degree: Bachelor of Science

August 1996-May 2000

Richmond, VA

LICENSURE AND CREDENTIALS

Clinical Psychologist, District of Columbia License #PSY1000587

Clinical Psychologist, Virginia License #0810005450

Clinical Psychologist, Maryland License #05804

Specialist in Forensic Psychology, American Board of Professional Psychology

Fellow, American Board of Forensic Psychology

National Register Health Service Provider #54882

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Partner/Forensic Psychologist**August 2016-present***VY Forensic Consulting International LLC (formerly Benesh & Yeaw Consulting LLC)*

- Co-owner of a forensic mental health consulting firm specializing in consultation, evaluation and expert testimony in a variety of legal and administrative contexts.
- Evaluations undertaken include, but are not limited to, competence to stand trial, criminal responsibility, assessment of risk/potential for recidivism, and fitness for duty.
- Consultation topics frequently include effects of substance use on memory, counter-intuitive behavior, false confession and police interrogation, and impact of mental illness on behavior.

Examination Faculty Member**April 2017-April 2021***American Board of Forensic Psychology (ABFP)*

- Board Certification in Forensic Psychology has a rigorous standard for credential and practice sample review.
- Faculty members review written reports submitted by candidates as practice samples to ensure the reports exemplify a high level of practice in forensic psychology and adhere to ethical principles within the field.
- The certification process culminates with a three-hour oral examination by three ABFP board-certified forensic psychologists in two primary areas of forensic practice as exemplified by the practice samples.

Deputy Chief, Center for Forensic Behavioral Sciences**October 2013-August 2016***Walter Reed National Military Medical Center*

Bethesda, MD

- Assisted in the management of a multidisciplinary team of psychologists and psychiatrists providing forensic behavioral health services to DoD and other federal agencies on a worldwide basis.
- Completed competency to stand trial and criminal responsibility evaluations, fitness for duty evaluations, security evaluations, and psychological autopsies integrating clinical interview, collateral data, and psychological testing.
- Provided expert consultation and testimony on military and select civilian court cases.

Faculty, Forensic Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship**July 2011-August 2016***Walter Reed National Military Medical Center*

Bethesda, MD

- Served as a supervisor to first- and second-year fellows in the only Forensic Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship Program accredited by the American Psychological Association.
- Conducted didactics for forensic fellows and select psychology residents on topics such as forensic applications of psychological testing, ethics in forensic psychology,

competency evaluations, responsibility evaluations, malingering, and expert witness and consultation.

- Reviewed written reports and psychological testing data/interpretations and provide ongoing feedback to fellows to assist them in developing communication skills appropriate to the legal context.

Northern Regional Medical Command Forensic Consultant April 2013-August 2014

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center

Bethesda, MD

- Served as the subject matter expert for forensic behavioral health issues within Northern Regional Medical Command (NRMC) area of operations, which includes Ft. Knox, Ft. Drum, Ft. Detrick, Ft. Meade, Ft. Lee, Ft. Eustis, Ft. Bragg and the United States Military Academy at West Point.
- Reviewed all Rules for Courts-Martial (RCM) 706 (competency to stand trial/criminal responsibility) evaluations and behavioral health expert consultant/witness requests submitted within NRMC.
- Conducted quality assurance checks on RCM 706 reports completed by NRMC behavioral health providers.

Forensic Psychology Fellow

July 2009-July 2011

Walter Reed Army Medical Center

Washington, D.C

- Conducted sanity board evaluations, fitness for duty evaluations, security evaluations, and psychological autopsies integrating clinical interview, collateral data, and psychological testing.
- Conducted responsibility, competency, risk, and diagnostic evaluations at St. Elizabeth's Forensic Inpatient Hospital.
- Provided expert consultation to the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC) as an invited member with the Behavioral Analysis Unit.
- Served as a consultant for the U.S. Marshals Service's Behavioral Analysis Unit within the National Sex Offender Targeting Center.

Staff Psychologist

April 2008-February 2009

Madigan Army Medical Center

Tacoma, WA

- Completed over 70 military fitness-for-duty and administrative separation evaluations through the Department of Psychology in the Behavioral Health Services Clinic.
- Conducted psychological assessments for security clearances and personnel selection for special schools and missions such as recruiter, drill sergeant, sniper, and long range surveillance (LRS).
- Provided solution-focused/short-term and longer-term, evidenced-based outpatient therapy to an average of 20 soldiers per week.

Chief, Clinical Operations

July 2007-April 2008

85th Medical Detachment Combat Stress Control

Qayarah-West, Iraq

- Served as Chief of clinical operations and psychologist for the Combat Stress Control Clinic on Contingency Operating Base Q-West in Northern Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) 06-08.
- Managed all clinical activities of the prevention team, including outreach, unit briefings, individual treatment and other support services for over 6000 Soldiers.
- Conducted forensic assessments, including psychological testing and clinical interviews, for RCM 706 Sanity Boards, personnel selection, command-directed evaluations, and administrative separation boards.
- Created and conducted a training program designed to address the shortfalls in behavioral health services provided to Military Transition Teams (MiTTs) in the Iraqi Theater of Operations.
- Assisted in the development of a behavioral health education package for military medics that became part of Multi-National Corps Iraq's Suicide Prevention Plan.

Clinic Officer-in-Charge

January 2007-June 2007

85th Medical Detachment Combat Stress Control

Mosul, Iraq

- Served as OIC and psychologist for the Combat Stress Control Clinic on Forward Operating Base Marez in Northern Iraq in support of OIF 06-08.
- Managed all clinical activities of the prevention team assigned, including outreach, unit briefings, individual treatment and other support services for over 2500 soldiers.
- Served as an expert consultant and provided education to unit commanders, chaplains, medical personnel and other key leaders on issues of combat/operational stress.

PUBLICATIONS

Sweda, M., & Benesh, S. (2014). Identifying relevant forensic issues in a military context. In K. Heilbrun, D. DeMatteo, S. Brooks Holliday, and C. LaDuke (eds.), *Forensic mental health assessment: A casebook (2nd edition)*. New York: Oxford.

PRESENTATIONS

“Working with Experts.” U.S. Army Basic Trial Advocacy Course, Ft. Belvoir, VA, November 2023.

“RCM 706 sanity boards: Crazy now or crazy then?” Navy Defense Services Office Symposium, Crystal City, VA, September 2023.

“Evaluations of the Accused: RCM 706 and Disputed Confessions,” U.S. Navy Special Trial Counsel Certification Course (STCCC), Naval Air Station North Island, Coronado, CA, June 2023.

“The effects of alcohol on the brain and behavior,” U.S. Army Sexual Assault Trial Advocacy Course, Ft. Belvoir, VA, September 2022.

“The effects of alcohol on the brain and behavior,” U.S. Army Sexual Assault Trial Advocacy Course, Williamsburg, VA, September 2021.

“From interrogation to confession,” U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps Special Victims’ Prosecution Course, San Antonio, TX, January 2020.

“Working with experts,” U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General Corps Basic Trial Advocacy Course, Newport, Rhode Island, August 2019.

“Working with experts,” U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General Corps Basic Trial Advocacy Course, Newport, Rhode Island, September 2017.

“Memory distortions and source monitoring,” U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps Special Victims’ Prosecution Course, Washington, DC, July 2015.

“Sexual violence risk assessment,” U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps Special Victims’ Prosecution Course, Washington, DC, July 2015.

“From interrogation to confession,” U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps Special Victims’ Prosecution Course, Washington, DC, July 2015.

“RCM 706 sanity boards.” U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps Special Victims’ Prosecution Course, Washington, DC, July 2015.

“From interrogation to confession,” 2015 Experts Symposium, U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps, San Antonio, TX, March 2015.

“RCM 706 sanity boards” U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps Complex Litigation Course, Washington, DC, August 2014.

“Interrogations and confessions,” 2014 DCAP Sexual Assault Leadership Training, U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps, Ft. Belvoir, VA, August 2014.

“RCM 706 sanity boards: Crazy now or crazy then?” U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps Trial Counsel Assistance Program, Washington, DC, March 2014.

“Interrogations and confessions,” 2014 Experts Symposium, U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps, San Antonio, TX, March 2014.

“RCM 706 – Sanity Board Evaluations” Invited seminar given to Department of Defense Behavioral Health Providers. Womack Army Medical Center, Fort Bragg, NC, November 2013.

“Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Disorder, & Criminal Behavior,” Experts Symposium, U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps, Jacksonville, FL, March 2012.

“RCM 706 sanity boards: Crazy now or crazy then?” Experts Symposium, U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps, Jacksonville, FL, March 2012.

“Postdoctoral fellowship training in military forensic psychology at Walter Reed Army Medical Center,” Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington, DC, August 2011.

“Introduction to violence risk assessment,” with MAJ Ray McClenen, Psy.D.. Invited seminar given to Army Psychology Interns. Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, DC, May 2011.

“Successfully completing a sanity board: Practical aspects of the RCM 706 evaluation,” with MAJ Ray McClenen, Psy.D.. Invited seminar given to Army Psychology Interns. Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, DC, February 2011.

“Conducting sanity boards: RCM 706 and beyond.” Invited seminar given to Army Psychology Residents. Madigan Army Medical Center, Ft. Lewis, Washington, January 2009.

“Providers’ perspectives: Experiences from downrange,” with MAJ Jess Calohan, ARNP, Invited seminar given to behavioral health providers, Madigan Army Medical Center, Ft. Lewis, Washington, October 2008.

“Practicing as a psychologist in a deployed environment,” Invited seminar given to Army Psychology Interns via video teleconference (VTC). Madigan Army Medical Center, Ft. Lewis, Washington, September 2008.

“Managing combat stress,” Presentation given to over 200 Military Transition Team members undergoing deployment training at The Phoenix Academy, Camp Taji, Iraq, December 2007.

“Working with people with Alzheimer’s-type dementia: Validation therapy,” Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C., August 2000.