

## CRPA-Family training – NOW ONLINE!



Veteran trainer, **Tawana Rowser-Brown**, joins training partner **Toby Haskins** and **Lori Drescher** as one of the three ASAP-NYCB Trainer Registry members authorized to pivot the specialty CRPA-Family online. Originally introduced in 2019 and offered around the state by select training colleagues, Rowser-Brown pioneered her approved Zoom program in April to capacity numbers, and ASAP-NYCB has received CRPA-Family applications from her graduates.

“One primary consideration was ensuring fidelity to the original curriculum,” she confirms. At time of writing, Rowser-Brown is preparing her third CRPA-Family online training and looking forward to similar results.

What happened to CRPA-Family training between 2019 and 2023? Certifications Development Coordinator **Doug Rosenberry** explains: “COVID shut down classroom training before CRPA-Family could really gain momentum in the field. It was a huge setback for everyone.”



He continues, “While the certification board quickly pivoted to approving online foundational training, particularly the CCAR products [see interview with CCAR’s **Stacy Charpentier**, E-News, July 2023], there’s been a reluctance historically to view online role training as a viable method for delivering competency-based curriculum. Not only has the pivot helped to fill the demand for quality role training, but it’s expanded access to training throughout New York State and beyond.”

ASAP’s hands were also tied by the status of the CRPA-Family certification itself. “CRPA-Family is what’s known technically as a ‘parentetic,’” says **Ruth Riddick**, ASAP-Peer Workforce Initiative administrator. “That is, it relies on its ‘parent,’ a pre-existing foundational certification – in this case, the Certified Recovery Peer Advocate (CRPA; not CRPA-Provisional).”



Although the origin of the popular “CRPA” certification is not so well-known, its role in advancing OASAS goals for the peer workforce was an important factor in securing funding and authorization for pivoting the CRPA-Family training online. “Everything about professional certification is technical,” Riddick warns before launching into a (technical) explanation.

“The popular ‘CRPA’ is based on the IC&RC Peer Recovery certification. Unlike Veteran Supported Recovery (VSR), it’s not an ASAP-originated or owned certification. (Which is why CRPA candidates sit for the IC&RC Peer Recovery exam, not for an ASAP NYS or a CRPA exam.)” As a result, she continues, “any specialties (or parentetics) under CRPA require external authorization before they can be developed.” ASAP secured this authorization in late 2022 and immediately began the work of pivoting CRPA-Family online.

Rowser-Brown picks up the story. “I was part of the first CRPA-Family TOT back in 2019,” she remembers, “But, due to the pandemic, in-person training has been tough to do. I began offering in-person CRPA-Family training in April 2023.” Rowser-Brown didn’t begin preparing the pivot until late last year. No stranger to delivering trainings originally developed by others, she describes the process. “I prepared for the online pivot by carefully reviewing the in-person training material and modifying it, where appropriate, to an online friendly platform.”

Her personal training preference was also a consideration. “I personally prefer delivering trainings in-person because there is an ineffable quality to being in the physical presence of other human beings,” she says before adding, “But I absolutely love the interactions that are unique to online training sessions as well.” For Rowser-Brown, it’s a question of balance and whatever works.

And which platform works better for her students? “I’m so glad you asked me this question because I view the answer as ‘both’ rather than an ‘either/or.’” She believes there are benefits and drawbacks to both online platforms and physical classroom trainings. “It’s very individual.”

Asked to summarize the value of CRPA-Family role training both for certification candidates and CARC/CRPA certificants just looking for continuing education credits, Rowser-Brown says, “The CRPA-Family training provides a unique opportunity for participants to review the CRPA core competencies through the lens of supporting family members impacted by addiction.” Tawana Rowser-Brown and training partner Toby Haskins are offering CRPA-Family training on a quarterly schedule.

Further information at <https://www.asapnys.org/crpa-f-training/>.