



## 2022 Linda Eisele Award



Honoree

*Debbie Schugg*

Debbie Schugg has 30 years' experience working with families of at-risk youth and those with special needs. While she is a Family Recruiter and Family Coach at Kinship Center, *a member of Seneca Family of Agencies* with extensive experience as Lead Parent Partner in an Adoption and Permanency Wraparound Program, she is also a parent who personifies attachment parenting.

Debbie is the mother of eight children from culturally diverse backgrounds, seven were adopted in sibling groups from the foster care system. All of a sudden, Debbie became the specialty adoption client like those she worked to guide and prepare for the adoption/foster process. She and her husband Oskar adopted a sibling set of 3 who had experienced severe trauma and in poor shape. Debbie maximized the use of every service available to strengthen her family, and eventually adopted a second sibling set. Both sibling sets are deaf as is her husband Oskar. Her fluency in American Sign Language and lived experience within the deaf community added a significant dimension to her unique perspective, parenting and skill set.

As Debbie's knowledge and abilities grew, so did her recognition for adopting and parenting children with diverse needs and challenges. Her empathy and understanding of children who experienced severe loss and intense trauma earned her a position as the only parent member of the agency's national training team.

As a consultant and trainer for families, schools, agencies and residential treatment facilities Debbie shares her experience to help others identify trauma-based behaviors, shift culture and language regarding adoption, and provide implementable strategies to help children heal and families thrive.

The interest in her powerful story of healing in large and deaf family system has resulted in Debbie becoming a nationally recognized keynote speaker, and featured guest on podcasts and videos. While her first set of children are adults, she is now parent and guardian to a sibling set of her grandchildren.

Debbie and her husband continue to foster teens in the local foster care system, providing a safe haven and a permanent connection for teens and young adults—many of them identifying as LGBTQ. The children continue to come and never leave her family.



## 2022 Jane Koomar Memorial Innovation Award



Honoree

*Sharon Kaplan Roszia*

Sharon Kaplan Roszia, MS is an accomplished educator, consultant and author who has devoted her decades-long career to foster care, adoption and permanency. She has conducted numerous trainings, presentations and other highly respected work on all aspects of child welfare, both nationally and internationally. Additionally, she has provided – and still provides – direct services to families and organizational consulting on adoption’s lifelong issues and generational impact.

Sharon proposed the first clinical training to achieve competency for child placement and mental health professionals in the field. She is a pioneer in open adoption and created landmark educational work for developing practice relating to openness, as well as to LGBTQ families, in adoption.

She is co-author of “The Open Adoption Experience: A Complete Guide for Adoptive and Birth Families, from Making the Decision through the Child’s Growing Year” and “Cooperative Adoption: The Official Handbook,” a contributor on “Creating Kinship,” “Working with Older Adoptees: A Sourcebook of Innovative Models,” “Siblings in Adoption and Foster Care,” and “Traumatic Separations and Honored Connections.” She has produced valuable training videos and written curricula for adoptive families and professionals, published in magazines and interviewed by many journalists as a leading expert in the field.

Sharon has received many honors including the Congressional Coalition on Adoption - Angel in Adoption Award, and the Annette Baran and Reuben Pannor Award for Outstanding Work in Adoption as well as recognition from the Association for Treatment and Training in the Attachment of Children (ATTACH). The framework for her training and writing are the Seven Core Issues of Adoption. Sharon has parented through birth, adoption and foster care.



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## 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award



Honoree

*Dr. Ruth Lanius*

Ruth Lanius, MD, PhD, Professor of Psychiatry is the director of the posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) research unit at the University of Western Ontario. She established the Traumatic Stress Service and the Traumatic Stress Service Workplace Program, services that specialize in the treatment and research of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and related comorbid disorders.

She currently holds the Harris-Woodman Chair in Mind-Body Medicine at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry at the University of Western Ontario. Her research interests focus on studying the neurobiology of PTSD and treatment outcome research examining various pharmacological and psychotherapeutic methods.

She has authored more than 100 published papers and chapters in the field of traumatic stress and is currently funded by several federal funding agencies. She regularly lectures on the topic of PTSD nationally and internationally. She has recently published a book 'The Impact of Early Life Trauma on Health and Disease' with Eric Vermetten and Clare Pain.