



# Roanoke Park Counseling

formerly Shepherd's Counseling Services

## Bearing Witness



*"There is no greater agony than  
bearing an untold story inside you."  
- Maya Angelou*

### A Message from the Executive Director

Many years ago, when I was interviewing for a therapist job at (then) Shepherd's Counseling Services, our esteemed clinical coordinator, Mary Bayard, leaned forward and said words I have remembered to this day. With her characteristic sincerity and fierce dedication, Mary said, "You know, we consider it an honor to do this work." **Over time I came to know what is so deeply true – it is, indeed, an honor to walk with survivors and to bear witness to both their suffering and their journey to healing.**

To bear witness is to acknowledge that something exists or is true. When a child is sexually abused, there is most often no acknowledgement at all. The world around them goes on as if nothing happened when, in fact, *everything* in the abused child's life has changed. This silent invalidation leaves the child confused and often

questioning their own experience. Survivors often describe this experience as becoming invisible to others and often to themselves.

**If we are honest, it is easy to look away – to turn away from the very unpleasant reality that children are sexually abused far more often than we care to know and that their pain can last a lifetime.** Unwittingly we become complicit in holding the secret, denying the pain, acting as if the dreadful pain of sexual abuse can become a thing of the past. Perhaps it's just too easy to *not* bear witness.

We would wish to believe that time heals all wounds and that the shrouded suffering of sexual violation in childhood will be left in the past. **What is not acknowledged, however, does not go away – the pain simply deepens.** This is what we, at Roanoke

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### Did you know?

**Whether you realize it or not, child sexual abuse affects us all.**

The health and social impacts of child sexual abuse on a survivor last a lifetime and affect us all socially and financially.

→ According to the CDC, there are an estimated **42 million adult survivors** living in the United States today.

→ The total lifetime economic burden of child sexual abuse in the United States in 2015 was estimated to be at least **\$9.3 billion.**

→ The average lifetime cost per victim of child abuse is **\$210,012.**

→ Those who experienced childhood sexual abuse are one-and-a-half times more likely to report **serious health problems.**

Although these numbers are alarmingly high, they don't capture the immeasurable human suffering that survivors of childhood sexual abuse endure.

Your generous support allows survivors to find an end to their suffering and reclaim a vital and productive life. **Thank you!**



## Sixth Annual Fall Luncheon

Thanks to our community of caring supporters who believe in the power of transformative healing, together we raised **more than \$47,000** for survivors of childhood sexual abuse during our virtual **Sixth Annual Fall Luncheon: *Finding Hope, Inspiring Healing*** on Wednesday, October 6.



Janice Palm,  
Executive Director

We hoped to be able to gather in person for our luncheon but due to the ongoing risks of the COVID-19 pandemic, we felt it was best for everyone's safety to meet virtually again this year. While we missed greeting everyone in person, our virtual event allowed us to join together from near and far (we even had a guest attending from Switzerland!) to witness the courageous and inspirational stories of survivors of

childhood sexual abuse as they shared their experiences of healing.

Our deepest thanks to our survivor speaker Ho-Duong as well as our special guest, Broadway performer and award-winning author Martin Moran, whose genuine stories of hope inspired all who attended our virtual luncheon! Special thanks are also extended to our generous sponsors: PCVA Law, Lemonidis Consulting and Law Group, Beverly Boy Productions, and ProTimeSports.



Luncheon speakers and RPC board members Ken Roden (left) and Paige Hanley (right).

### **Thank YOU for making healing possible!**



Behind the scenes at RPC's virtual luncheon event on October 6.

Your valuable support of survivors transforms the lives of every person who finds the courage to reach out to us for the help and healing they so truly deserve!

#### **P.S. Did you miss the live event?**

You can watch the recording of our luncheon on our website at [www.roanokeparkcounseling.org](http://www.roanokeparkcounseling.org)

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Park Counseling, know and deeply understand.

Imagine the relief that a survivor finds when they find a place that does not turn away from the reality of sexual abuse. **A place that understands and validates that sexual violation in childhood is a life-changing event and most importantly that their suffering – all of the years of it – matters.** A place that understands that survivors need and deserve the time it takes to find healing. This is the kind of care that survivors find when they make their way to RPC.

**We understand the long journey of suffering that survivors have traveled, and we hold open the space for their suffering to be known.** Each day for all of our 37 years of existence we have acknowledged both the pain and the possibility of healing. We have the privilege of walking with survivors and witnessing the life and vitality that rise from tenderly opening the wound that has been sealed for so long. **It is most certainly an honor to bear witness to the courage and strength that survivors find on their journey to healing.**

And what an honor it is to know that the suffering of survivors also matters to you, our wonderful community of individuals who support this work and are willing to see the reality of the pain and the possibility of hope for survivors. **You are the circle of steady support and belief that allows survivors to find the kind of renewed life that they so deeply deserve.**

To each of you I offer my deepest gratitude. Thank you for not looking away. **Thank you for bearing witness along with us and for believing that there is cause for hope for survivors on their journey to healing.**

*Janice Palm*

- Janice Palm, MA, LMHC  
Executive Director

## Therapist Spotlight: Julia Laibson

Julia Laibson began working for RPC in the Summer of 2020. She holds an MA in Child, Couple, and Family Therapy from Antioch University.



Julia Laibson  
MA, LMFT

Her specialties include: Trauma (2), Grief and Loss, Family System, ADD/ADHD, and Anxiety

### Q.) What is your professional background / previous experience?

**A.)** I started working with trauma as a massage therapist 27 years ago. It was there that I experienced how trauma lives in the body and how our life experiences affect us on an energetic and cellular level. Trying to support clients in trauma led me back to school where I completed graduate work in Child, Couple and Family Therapy.

I operated my own private practice for seven years, working with individuals ages 5 years and older, couples, and families and specialized in abuse and trauma. And most recently I worked as a school-based therapist with elementary students.

### Q.) What is important and meaningful to you about working at RPC?

**A.)** In working with survivors of CSA I am pulling from all the different modalities I have done. Throughout my personal and professional career, I have seen countless individuals and families suffering from effects of childhood abuse and trauma.

I appreciate working at RPC because we not only understand the complexity of effects of childhood sexual abuse but are willing to support individuals therapeutically for as long as is needed. The support and care I receive

## The Happy Hauler: #HaulingWithHeart

Roanoke Park Counseling wants to give a special "shout-out" to the Happy Hauler, a Seattle-based junk removal service.

The Happy Hauler is a family-run small business providing junk hauling, removal of construction debris, demolition, donations, and recycling for the greater Seattle area. They provide fast, honest, sustainable junk removal and if items can be reused, they donate them to local King County charities.

The Happy Hauler has made several deliveries of large donated items to RPC - all for no charge - and we could not be more thankful for their generosity!



*John Stromberg, owner of Happy Hauler, delivers a donated standing desk and office chair to RPC's offices.*

For more info about The Happy Hauler, visit [www.happyhauler.com](http://www.happyhauler.com)

as a therapist from my fellow therapists, my supervisors, and the board are truly amazing and is what makes it possible to do this work.

### Q. What inspires you about working with survivors at RPC?

**A.)** I am constantly touched and amazed at the tremendous courage of group clients who step forward to share their truth with others so they will know they are not alone as well as individual clients who bravely face their shame and pain in pursuing their own healing. I am inspired every day to learn and do more to compassionately support and help empower such amazing people.

## Furniture Wanted

We are looking for **new or lightly used sofas and chairs** in neutral colors to upgrade our therapy rooms.

If you have a furniture connection or would like to make a donation, please contact Susan at [susan@roanokeparkcounseling.org](mailto:susan@roanokeparkcounseling.org).



## RPC is a Wonderful Place to Work! We're Hiring Part-Time Therapists

Roanoke Park Counseling is currently hiring for contract therapists with experience in treating developmental trauma.

Working with our dedicated and skilled team at RPC is a great adjunct to private practice. We offer a part-time flexible schedule, a supportive collegial culture, a stipend for continuing education, and opportunities to lead and co-lead therapy groups.

To find out more about this wonderful opportunity, contact Amanda Franklin at [amanda@roanokeparkcounseling.org](mailto:amanda@roanokeparkcounseling.org) or share this information with someone who might be interested in working for RPC.



# Roanoke Park Counseling

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## GIVING TUESDAY is November 30!

Roanoke Park Counseling is proud to participate in **#GivingTuesday** on Tuesday, November 30, 2021.

Your support on **#GivingTuesday** - and every day - fulfills our mission of providing counseling services for adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse, regardless of their financial need, and helping them to find their path to peace in the year ahead and on their journey to a hopeful and fulfilling life. **Find more details at [www.roanokeparkcounseling.org](http://www.roanokeparkcounseling.org)**



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