



An Interview with Kristina Anderson...

Tell us about the [Koshka Foundation](#).

On the morning of April 16, 2007, a student at Virginia Tech carried out a horrific attack on campus in which he killed 32 students and faculty and physically injured 17 others. I was among those injured. In the aftermath, I became involved with the university's Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention and attended safety symposiums. But as I learned more about the field, I quickly realized that all of the discussions were centered solely on the police and EMS response. At the time there was no way to examine the impact of actions of survivors and what insights they might have to contribute.

I founded the Koshka Foundation with the mission to provide that much-needed education to the public about the importance of active threat training by incorporating real-life testimonies and perspectives of those who have responded as professionals, or as those who were unfortunately impacted. Our presentations are often tailored directly to law enforcement, firefighters and first responders but the other half of our audiences are business professionals, students and teachers. Through the lens of experiences of survivors, we're helping student affairs professionals, campus safety and other departments better understand how to respond to specific, often unanticipated, needs in the longer recovery period.

Share with us an accomplishment of the [Koshka Foundation](#)?

I'm incredibly proud of some of the partnerships we have developed with FEMA as part of their Joint Counter Terrorism Awareness Workshops (JCTAWS). Through these workshops, we've brought in the Virginia Tech case study to educate the attendees on some of the threat assessment implications and behavioral indicators of the Virginia Tech shooter that could help others prevent and mitigate similar tragedies.

What's something you want people to know about the field of school safety?

The findings of the "[Safe School Initiative](#)" always resonate with me as important knowledge that could be more thoughtfully read and internalized by schools, parents, community partners, or anyone who has a stake in ensuring safety. The fact is that in many cases, incidents of school-based, targeted violence are not sudden. According to the study, "in nearly two-thirds of the incidents, more than one person had information about the attack before it occurred." I think this makes the case to ensure each school has a threat assessment process, or a way to guarantee that every person has a way to share and safety information.

What do you like to do when you're not working?

I love to be outdoors and explore new hiking and running trails, as well as cook. The opportunity to buy fresh produce and actually prepare a meal (versus airport cuisine) is one I never take for granted. And for people who know me well – I will never turn down a red wine tasting!

If you were given \$1,000 and you had to spend it on something fun for yourself, what would you buy?

I would book a destination yoga retreat, without question! Because traveling for work occupies so much of my time, the thought of being physically still in one place without work, and focusing on replenishing balance and personal health is very welcome.