

The Tow Youth Justice Institute is a university, state and private partnership established to lead the way in juvenile justice reform through collaborative planning, training, research and advocacy.

UPCOMING JJPOC MEETINGS:

JJPOC Meetings are the third Thursday of every month at 2 p.m., at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford.

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PRESS CONFERENCE WITH GOVERNOR MALLOY

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy announced on Tuesday, March 20th that he has submitted proposed legislative bills that would raise the age of people protected by juvenile and "youthful offender" status from 18 to 21.

Malloy said at a news conference in the Henry C. Lee Institute of Forensic Science at the University of New Haven that the proposals are part of a broader effort to steer young people out of the prison system and smooth the way for them to better recover from youthful mistakes that might otherwise have a lasting, negative effect on their lives.

RESEARCH AT THE TOW YOUTH JUSTICE INSTITUTE - AN ACADEMIC ARM TO SUPPORT JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM

The Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI) was created in the fall of 2014 thanks to the generous support of The Tow Foundation, the state of Connecticut and the University of New Haven. The overarching goal of the Institute was and is to keep reform of the juvenile justice system front and center. It fulfills this challenge in many ways including through its Leadership Development Program, its new college concentration on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and its expanded list of internships and other experiential opportunities for our students.

Another and very important way the TYJI keeps reform on the state's radar screen is through research. This team of professors and students seek to identify new and improved ways of responding to youthful offending through a data-driven lens that helps us to implement evidence based programs and policies in juvenile justice. The Director of Research for TYJI, Dr. Danielle Cooper, heads the team of research undergraduate, graduate and PhD students.



The team works on research projects for the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) and agencies outside of JJPOC. Our students provide research that focuses on juvenile justice matters with a goal of identifying opportunities for policy change.

The two primary focus areas for the team are:

- Research and evaluation that inform policy, planning, development, and implementation in order to elevate evidence based practices and programs for youth involved in the juvenile and criminal justice system.
- Engage with youth serving organizations that focus on youth justice reform such as advocacy groups, community agencies, state agencies, national juvenile justice organizations, public school systems and more, to collaborate on evidence-based youth justice reform.

Members of the research team often attend the JJPOC meetings and the JJPOC workgroup meetings on Diversion, Incarceration and Recidivism. This offers students exposure to a wide array of individuals working in the field which provides a deeper, practical understanding of reform and the research they are working on to support it.

JJPOC UPDATE

JJPOC's 2018 recommendations in Proposed Bill No. 5562 "An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee" was voted favorably of Judiciary Committee April 4, 2018. Highlights of the proposed bill 5562 are:

- Beginning July 1, 2018, the State Department of Education (SDE) and Youth Service Bureau network should implement Community-Based Diversion System Plan, developed pursuant to PA 16-147, § 18(k), over a two-year period within available appropriations

- Beginning July 1, 2018, SDE should implement the School-Based Diversion Framework over a two-year period, within available appropriations

- JJPOC should develop a justice reinvestment plan to guide reinvestment of any savings realized from the decreased use of incarceration and congregate care towards strategic investments in home-, school-, and community-based behavioral health services and supports for children diverted from, or involved with, the juvenile justice system

- Beginning January 1, 2021, no child under the age of 18 shall be housed in the custody of the Department of Correction (DOC)

- On or before October 1, 2019, the DOC, the Department of Children and Families, SDE, and the Judicial Branch shall submit to the JJPOC a plan for implementing Recommendation 1.1. The purpose of the plan shall be to ensure that youth prosecuted as adults are detained and incarcerated in a safe, secure, and developmentally appropriate environment

- JJPOC shall periodically request, receive, and review information regarding conditions of confinement including services available for youth at the Manson Youth Institute

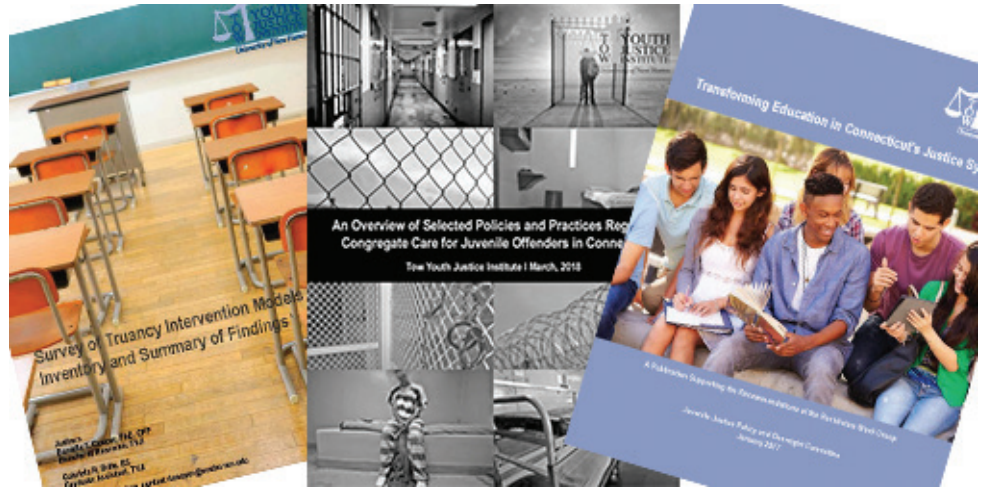
- JJPOC should create a plan to develop a consolidated system for educating youth in custody for implementation by July 1, 2020

TRANSFORMING YOUTH JUSTICE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM KICKS OFF ITS THIRD COHORT!



The 2018 program began in March with 16 members from the Greater New Haven, Fairfield County, Greater Hartford and Greater Waterbury areas: Visit newhaven.edu/towyouth and click on the Transforming Youth Justice tab for a list of the 2018 Cohort!

ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS



The following are some of the projects the Research Team is working on:

CT Juvenile Correctional Facilities: A study of youth in confinement (Phase I) focuses on state-run facilities, with the goal of investigating the relationship between conditions of confinement and various well-being outcomes such as mental health and recidivism and analyzed by demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, race, etc.) of those youth post release from the facilities.

State-funded Privately Operated Congregate Care: A Study of the Network of Residential Programs for Juvenile Offenders (Phase II) identifies the scope and capacities of the existing state-funded network of privately operated residential programs for pre-trial and adjudicated juvenile offenders and to identify options for expansion. It also aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the network in meeting the needs of pre-trial and adjudicated/convicted juvenile offenders.

The Pre- and Post-Assessment of Community-Based Programs and Recidivism Outcomes Study contrasts changes in community-based programs, the demographic characteristics of youths served, and recidivism outcomes leading up to and throughout the implementation of Connecticut's Public Act 07-04, known as the Raise the Age (RTA) legislation. This study also addresses the legislative mandate stated in Public Act 14-217, which calls for an assessment of community-based programs.

Video Review of Use of Restraint in State-run Facilities evaluates if videos of incidents and incident report from January 1st, 2015 to December 31st, 2016 are in violation of disciplinary practices. This project augments Congregate Care Phase I. Using data that has been collected from state agencies; sample videos will be reviewed to determine if what is being coded is a good reflection of the incidents that are reported. Commentary will also be made based the reviewed disciplinary actions taken.

Interviews with Youth Detained or Committed in State-run Facilities involves conducting interviews with youth who have been either adjudicated delinquent and who have committed to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or youth who have been found guilty and have been committed to the Department of Corrections (DOC). Youth who are on probation who received pretrial detention will also be interviewed. This interview is comprised of 10 questions which includes questions that highlight a youth's understanding of the rules, the supervision of the facility, the perception of social support (both in and outside of their facilities), and their perceptions of the use of punishment within facilities.



MEET THE RESEARCH TEAM

Dr. Danielle Cooper is an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice and the Director of Research at the Tow Youth Justice Institute at the University of New Haven. Dr. Cooper received her BS in Justice Systems (with a minor in Business Administration) in 2009 and her MA in Criminology from the University of Florida in 2011. She received her PhD in Criminology (with a minor in Organizational Leadership for Nonprofits) from the University of Florida in 2015. During her time in school, she was selected to serve as a McNair Baccalaureate Scholar (as an undergraduate) and a McKnight Doctoral Fellow (as a graduate student), both of which are programs focused on increasing minorities in academia. She currently conducts research in the areas of youth and young adults, juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, criminological theory, and sex offending. In addition to her work as a Professor and the Director of Research at UNH, she is also a Certified Prevention Professional who works with nonprofits and community organizations as a prevention trainer and evaluation consultant. Through her work in the community, she has collaborated with key stakeholders, such as youth and their parents, law enforcement, mental health professionals, and youth serving organizations.



Sarah J. Giarrusso is a Ph.D. Fellow (Criminal Justice) who plans to graduate in December of 2019. Sarah was working as a Fellow with forensic research when she was recommended to the TYJI based on her interest in juvenile justice. She has been a Research Fellow for the TYJI for the past two years. Sarah has a dual career plan: to pursue a career in academia within the fields of criminology/criminal justice with a special interest in youth justice and to work as an analyst for the government. The exposure to practitioners through the TYJI has shaped her future career goals.



Sara R. Jeffries is a Ph.D. Fellow in Criminal Justice with an expected graduation date of May 2020. Sara has been active with TYJI for four years and currently serves as a research fellow working on exploring the conditions of confinement for youth in Connecticut. TYJI has enriched Sara's desire to challenge issues of racism, violence, and poverty through empirical data-driven research focused on young people and their communities. Her experiences at TYJI have enhanced her juvenile justice policy skills and aided her future hopes to secure a position in quantitative juvenile justice policy research in government or the private sector.



Lanmeng Ma is a Criminal Justice, Ph.D. student who is expected to graduate May of 2019. Lanmeng was assigned to the research team as a Ph.D. fellow for two semesters. Outside of TYJI, she teaches and researches with other professors here at the University of New Haven. Lanmeng has much experience with studying juvenile justice related issues and attended JJPOC and its workgroups' meetings to have first-hand information of juvenile justice system reforms in Connecticut. Her experiences as TYJI has enhanced her interests in preventing juvenile delinquency. In the future, she hopes to conduct additional research related to Criminal Justice issues and become a professor.



Melissa Pierre is a graduate student who is expected to receive her M.S in Criminal Justice with a concentration in Forensic Psychology in May of 2018 and has been serving as a graduate intern here at Tow Youth Justice Institute for three semesters. She is also part of the nationally known Criminal Justice Honor Society, Alpha Tau. Melissa has been working on multiple research projects and is also part of the social media team for the Development and Communications content of TYJI. In the future, she plans to receive her Ph.D. in hopes that she will be able to advocate, advise, and counsel children and families. Juvenile justice is important to her, and she enjoys learning about the mental health aspect of criminal behavior and plans to integrate at-risk youth back into their communities with adequate treatment.



Yasmin Ramadan is a graduate student who is expected to graduate in May of 2020. She has been a part of TYJI research team for two semesters and joined TYJI because she found the institution to be of interest to her future career goals. Yasmin's prior job experiences involved working with the Center for Analytics. Yasmine's future endeavors include volunteering with the FBI or police department and focusing on investigating crimes, including some that are relevant to youth. Yasmine believes being on the research team has given her many opportunities and has also given her the ability to open her eyes to different perspectives when it comes to dealing with youth and thinking about ways to rehabilitate them and divert them in the right direction.



Victoria Cone is an undergraduate student studying Criminal Justice (Family and Juvenile Justice) and minoring in Psychology. She is expected to graduate in May of 2018 and has been a part of TYJI for two semesters. She is an active member of Alpha Lambda Delta First Year Honor Society, a sister of Phi Sigma Sigma, on the E-Board for Gamma Sigma Alpha Greek Honor Society, and a member of the Honors Program at the University of New Haven. Victoria's ultimate goal is to be a Juvenile Probation Office. She has also recognized that working at TYJI has affirmed for her that working with juvenile offenders is the path she wants to continue.

STUDENT EVENT

Color of Justice Revisited Tuesday, March 20, 2018

Students watched the *Color of Justice Revisited* and discussed their reactions to the documentary which addresses racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system. Experts in the field of Juvenile Justice facilitated conversations and addressed questions. Students' thoughts for action will be published in a Tow Youth Justice Institute publication as a follow-up to the event.

Tow Youth Justice Institute is grateful for the participation of the following facilitators:

- Christine Rapillo, Chief Public Defender, Office of the Chief Public Defender
- Francis Carino, Supervisory Assistant State's Attorney for Juvenile Matters, Office of the Chief State's Attorney
- Mike Lawlor, Under Secretary Office of Policy and Management, University of New Haven Faculty
- Leon Smith, JD, Director, Racial Justice Project, Center for Children's Advocacy
- Christina Quaranta, Director of Policy and Community Connections, CT Juvenile Justice Alliance Justice Advisors, CT Juvenile Justice Alliance
- Capt. Chris McKee, Suffield Police Dept.
- Officer Vince O'Banner, University of New Haven Police Dept.
- Asia (Hutchins) Ly Nhavatong, OPM/JJAC - University of New Haven 2017 Alumni



WELCOME RASHANDA MCCOLLUM, Education & Training Project Manager



Rashanda McCollum joins TYJI as the Manager of Education and Training Programs, responsible for the general oversight of projects, events and programs initiated by the TYJI. She will provide input and direction on the design, development and delivery of the Leadership Development Program, interdisciplinary campus-related projects, student and external audience educational events, and training and experiential education efforts in youth justice reform.

Rashanda has 10 years of experience developing innovative programs that promote equity in educational opportunity, advance fundamental human rights protections and promote social justice. Rashanda comes to us from William C. Graustein Memorial Fund where she provided strategic philanthropic direction on more than 100 grant proposals, and Capital Prep Harbor School in Bridgeport where she designed and implemented innovative programming and curriculum for junior social justice classes as in introduction to local, national and global social justice and human rights issues. Rashanda is deeply committed to improving the lives of youth and communities of color.

WELCOME DEVON MCCORMICK, Restorative Justices Practices Project Coordinator

Devon McCormick originally joined the Tow Youth Justice Institute team in September of 2016 as a part time coordinator for our Restorative Justice Practices Project. After a brief break in the project, we are happy to announce that the RJPP is back up and running with Devon coordinating the project full-time!

Devon came to TYJI after years working on issues of homelessness here in CT, as well as managing a large behavioral health framework implementation for Middletown Public Schools. She attended a counter-oppressive graduate school program and received her Master's in Social Change, which lead directly to her involvement in the Restorative Justice movement and her current position with TYJI. As the Restorative Justice Practice Project Coordinator, Devon manages TYJI's leg of the Child Health and Development's School-Based Diversion Initiative, focused on Restorative Justice Practices training and implementation state-wide at the school level. RJP is an effective diversionary tactic on the community side of juvenile justice reform, and as we grow our RJ work at TYJI we envision RJP being implemented across the continuum of juvenile service providers.



Please visit newhaven.edu/towyouth for more information about the Tow Youth Justice Institute. Please scan the image to read our other Issue Briefs and Quarterly Newsletters.